

Assessing Working Mothers' Quality Of Life: An Empirical Study

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Abstract: *Women are now stepping into paid workforce for various reasons. But multiple roles make pressure to maintain balance in dual spare like family and work. This paper contemplates the present scenario of quality of work life of working mothers working at private banks. Conflict between work and family deteriorate the quality of work life. The findings of the research show some factors that pose intimidation on daily life of working mothers'. Management needs to make a step for better productivity by perceiving the work-life of a working mother.*

Keywords: *Working mothers, Multiple roles, Management, Quality of life, Sylhet metropolitan city.*

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I. Introduction

Now-a-days women enter into paid workforce due to financial need, social attitude and increasing educational level. Managing work and family at a time pose a challenge for women. Especially for working mother, it is gradually become complex because of increasing number of nuclear family. Privatization, globalization and converging boundaries made the opportunities for talented manpower and creating dual career families. Such type of career orientation may create negligence on the other aspect of life. Thus it the root of work-life imbalance and make a dilemma that which role is will sequential. Their quality of life is greatly hampered by work-life and work-family conflicts. Working mother striving for financial independence also has the role of caring growing child to accomplish motherhood. The prevailing societal norms confine the women as house keeper and child bearer whether she doing job or not. These times demanding responsibilities make a stress among working mother and balancing the two poles become a formidable task. Imbalance between the two domains often meets with guilt from husband, family and relatives. "Work-life balance acts as a boon for working mothers which enables them to balance between work (career and ambition) and life (family, leisure, pleasure and personal development)" (Maiya & Bagali, 2014). The demanding and ever-increasing work pressure from both paid work and also from household leave less time for women herself. For ensuring a quality of life it is necessary to achieve balance in the two fronts. According to Delina & Raya (2013) the caring responsibilities of working mothers have lays heavy stress and it is combined with their professional duties. But for the progress of a nation it is essential to get contribution mutually from male and female. Work overload and personal-professional conflicts are the reason for creating boredom in work and also spill over into the family domain (Fu & Shaffer, 2001). Multitasking role that women play makes it difficult to manage work and life equally. The mismanagement occurs due to selecting the worth of work which is sequential. The constraints of working mother introduce pressures and as a consequence the balance of work-life is mismatched. The competing work demands and personal and family needs seem to be the most probable reason for work-life conflicts (Delina & Raya, 2013). According to Peeter et al. (2005) incompatible pressures from the job and family domains gives rise to imbalance. This issue is crucial for management because gradual imbalance and deterioration of quality of life brings stress and burnout. Successive tension among working mothers affects the productivity of an organization.

II. Literature Review

Grossman (1981) argues that knowledge economy created the changes in marital patterns and smaller families. This has led to an increase in the number of working women and, hence, working mother. The level of fit between diverse roles in a person's life is called work-life balancing. The endeavor of working mother to integrate among their different roles puts them under tremendous pressure. Also our powerful social trends marked the starting of work-life imbalance of women. Work-family conflict is defined as "a form of inter role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect". (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p.77). According to Netemeyer et al., (1996, p. 401) family-work conflict refers to "a form of inter-role conflict in which the general demands of, time devoted to, and strain created by

the family interfere with performing work-related responsibilities.” A working mother confronts this both forms of conflict for meeting the overabundance demands emanating from family and work domains (Boles et al., 2001). Basically these conflicts are the cause of work-life imbalance. Stone (1989) opines that women with children frequently live under great pressure. According to King et al. (1995) time pressures and parental demand that can be mitigated by instrumental support.

Research by Pleck et al. (1980) identified that parents experience more work-family conflict than married couples without children. When the personal time, family care, and paid work are managed and integrated with a minimum role conflict then it is called work-life balance. Kim & Ling (2001) opine that the supportive behavior of family members can extract the work-life conflict among working women. Sympathy, caring behavior, willingness to listen, giving suggestions can lessen the imbalance of life. According to Kirchmeyer (2000) living a balanced life requires the time, energy, and commitment to be well distributed across domains. The imbalance in work and life can hamper the working mothers' quality of life. Susi & Jawaharrani (2010) identified that work-life balance and employee engagement becomes a visible benchmark among high performing organizations.

A study conducted by Alam, et al. (2011) found that “married working women at Dhaka are guilty of demands playing multiple roles as a mother and professional. Not only they have to look after their children but also have to take care of their responsibilities at home and run after other errands and attend social and cultural functions.”Richard Welford (2008) in his research with work-life balance of working women in Hong Kong quotes that high percentage of respondents feels that work is the cause of health problems, stress, and lack of exercise. Friedman & Greenhaus (2000) opines that work and family conflict has consequences. This consequence lead the women towards two apparent opposites- an active and satisfying career, or marriage, children, and happy family life.

Work-life balance is the proper parity between personal and professional life. For career advancement it is necessary to get updated with the latest trends in the job. But usually working women can't make the balance because of their multitasking life. In a study with school teachers regarding the factors causing work-life imbalance by Madipelli, et al. (2013) presents that multiple roles played by women at work place and home reflecting boredom, frustration and stress lead to work life imbalance. Rout, et al. (1999) conducted a study in India finds that women facing considerable pressure, in the morning before going out to work and after work, to do necessary for the family. The objective of the study is to identify the profile of working mothers and assess the quality of life of a working mother.

III. Methodology

The study conducted during April and May 2017 in Sylhet metropolitan city. Data were obtained through semi-structured questionnaire from 50 working mothers working at private banks in Sylhet metropolitan city. 5 banks were selected through stratified sampling and than from each stratum 10 respondents were selected by snowball sampling. The pre-test of the questionnaire has been conducted in March 2017 on 15 working mother who are working at private banks. The collected data were coded, classified and tabulated through the Statistical Package for the Social Science.

IV. Research Findings

The findings of the research are divided into three sections. Here, the first section presents profile of the respondents to gain some personal information.

Table-1 Age of the respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Under 30 years	23	23.0	46.0	46.0
	30-40 years	17	17.0	34.0	80.0
	Over 40 years	10	10.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	50	50.0	100.0	
Total		100	100.0		

Source: Survey data

Table 1 show that 46 percent of the respondents' age is under 30 years. 34 percent are in the range of 30-40 years. Only 20 percent are over 40 years.

Table -2 Level of education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Graduate	31	31.0	62.0	62.0
	Masters	18	18.0	36.0	98.0
	PhD	1	1.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	50	50.0	100.0	
Missing	System	50	50.0		
Total		100	100.0		

Source: Survey data

The study shows (Table 2) that 62 percent of the respondents having graduation degree. 36 percent have masters' degree and only one of the respondent have PhD degree.

Table -3 Years in service

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 1 year	16	16.0	32.0	32.0
	More than 1 but less than 5 years	13	13.0	26.0	58.0
	More than 5 but less than 10 years	13	13.0	26.0	84.0
	More than 10 years	8	8.0	16.0	100.0
	Total	50	50.0	100.0	
Total		100	100.0		

Source: Survey data

Majority of the respondents (32 percent) doing their job for less than one year. 26 percent of the respondents are doing their job for more than one year but less than five years. Also same percentages are conducting their job for more than five but less than ten years. Only sixteen percent of the working mothers are doing job for more than ten years.

The second section presents profile of the respondents to gain insight on children and motherhood related information.

Table -4 No. of children

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	One	13	13.0	26.0	26.0
	Two	32	32.0	64.0	90.0
	Three or more	5	5.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	50	50.0	100.0	
Total		100	100.0		

Source: Survey data

The study represents that sixty four percent of the respondents have two children. Twenty six percent having one child and only five percent have three or more children.

Table -5 Type of childcare for the children

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Maids	21	21.0	42.0	42.0
	Childcare centre	9	9.0	18.0	60.0
	Family members living in the same houses	13	13.0	26.0	86.0
	Family members living elsewhere	7	7.0	14.0	100.0
	Total	50	50.0	100.0	
Total		100	100.0		

Source: Survey data

Above table represents that forty two percent of the working mother depends on maids for the childcare. Another portion (twenty six) of the respondents is depending on family members living in the same houses. Fourteen percent respondents rely on family members living elsewhere.

Table -6 Do you think that mothers need during the day?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	40	40.0	80.0	80.0
	No	1	1.0	2.0	82.0
	Indifference	9	9.0	18.0	100.0
	Total	50	50.0	100.0	
Missing	System	50	50.0		
Total		100	100.0		

Source: Survey data

In response to the question given in the above table represents that eighty percent of the working mother argue that mothers have had the need to attend their children during the day. Eighteen percent are indifference in their response and only two percent have negative response regarding this question.

Table -7 What is the reason behind the mothers need during the day?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Can look after him properly	19	19.0	38.0	38.0
	Can feed the child properly	14	14.0	28.0	66.0
	Others cannot take care of a child as a mother can	12	12.0	24.0	90.0
	Children need mothers always for proper socialization	5	5.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	50	50.0	100.0	
Total		100	100.0		

Source: Survey data

Majority of the respondents (thirty eight percent) opines that mothers can look after the children properly. Second majority (twenty eight percent) states that mothers can feed the child properly. Twenty eight percent states that others cannot take care of a child as like mother. Ten percent of the respondents argue that for proper socialization of the children mothers' attendance is crucial.

Table -8 Reasons for sometimes inattention towards the children after returning from work

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Because of fatigue	21	21.0	42.0	42.0
	Because of domestic duties	23	23.0	46.0	88.0
	Sufficient time is not available	6	6.0	12.0	100.0
	Total	50	50.0	100.0	
Total		100	100.0		

Source: Survey data

Forty six percent of the respondents said that because of domestic duties they can't give due attention to the child. Another major portion of the respondents (Forty two percent) are accusing their fatigue after returning from office regarding this issue. Twelve percent said that sufficient time is not available.

Table -9 Reasons for not spending sufficient time with children

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Stay outside home	6	6.0	12.0	12.0
	Have to attend domestic duties	20	20.0	40.0	52.0
	After returning back are not in a position to attend children	24	24.0	48.0	100.0
	Total	50	50.0	100.0	
Missing	System	50	50.0		
Total		100	100.0		

Source: Survey data

Most of the working mother (Forty eight percent) opines that after returning back they are not in a position to take care the children properly for their tiredness and for another duties. Forty percent of the

respondents said that they have to attend domestic duties after returning back from office. That's why they cannot give sufficient time for their children. Only twelve percent accuse their staying outside home is the main reason for not spending sufficient time with children.

The third section represents the factors related with quality of work life of working mothers. Table 10 highlighted that the statement career growth is hindered by motherhood having highest mean value 4.12 and standard deviation is .799. One of the respondents said that often she can't attend some social program of colleagues' and official program after office hour. Because of hustle to reach home as early as possible to take care of child and for domestic duties. As a working woman, my biggest challenge is maintaining work and life simultaneously, this statement gain the mean value 4.00 and standard deviation .881. Working mothers have to manage her time for office work and also for family. They have to make a balanced daily routine and every time maintaining this routine may not be possible. When some problem or extra duties are going on in any one place (At office or at home), it makes hectic situation among working mothers. Mean value 3.80 indicates facing work overload affects work-life balance. Working mothers are worried about their work stress on health and this is supported by the mean value 3.72 and standard deviation .834. One of the working mother expressed that "I have used to sleep for only five hours daily and suffering from back pain and frequent headache. I am also realizing proper rest can give regarding health problem." Most of the working mother opines that they are trying hard to do office responsibility properly but sometimes get bothered by coworkers when there is lacking on work appreciation.

Table -10 Assessing quality of life of working mothers

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Domestic pressure influences my peace of mind	50	3.44	1.110
Miss quality time with my family	50	3.42	.928
I usually work long hours, because the job demands it.	50	2.74	1.306
My relationship with my partner is suffering	50	3.60	.904
Finding time for hobbies, leisure activities, or to maintain friendship and extended family relationship is difficult	50	3.40	1.010
I worry about the effect of work stress on my health and mind	50	3.72	.834
Facing work overload that affects life balancing	50	3.80	.833
Can get updated with latest trends of your job.	50	3.64	.985
Being a mother makes you less valuable as an employee	50	3.52	1.054
Your family cooperate with you	50	3.40	1.125
Career growth is hindered by motherhood	50	4.12	.799
As a working woman, my biggest challenge is maintaining work and life simultaneously	50	4.00	.881
Valid N (listwise)	50		

Source: Survey data

Note: Using Likert scale- 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5= Strongly agree.

It makes the feeling of less valuable as an employee (Mean value 3.52, Standard deviation 1.05). Mean value 3.64 indicates that mothers can get updated with latest trends of their job. Also working mother argues that being updated with job trends crucial for career growth but it is not so easy. It comes from sacrificing the personal time specifically for a working mother. "My relationship with my partner is suffering"- this statement contains mean value 3.60 and standard deviation .90. Attending social program with family is an important source of making bonds with peoples. But working mothers can't attend many of the programs because of job and family duties which can hamper the relationships. "Domestic pressure influences my peace of mind" and "miss quality time with my family" has the mean value 3.44 and 3.42 respectively. Working mothers can pursue her multidimensional rules if she gets support from husband and in-laws. The statement "your family cooperates with you" contains mean value 3.40.

V. Conclusion

Work and life balance of a working mother have to be treated as a crucial issue because its negative impact may also be appear at office work as well as in family. Findings from the research reveal that working mothers' life is hampered by many different factors. These factors impede them to render a quality full life. Human resources departments' intervention is necessary here by mentoring, counseling etc. Praise and reward giving may be tool for motivating working mothers for better balance maintaining and have a quality life. Multiple obligations make a position of dilemma. For that reason working mothers have to make decision about the priority of the work. Sometimes widespread demand from different facet makes stress on them. Continuous

help from family members is necessary for maintaining their quality of life. Health and medication program can lessen the stress and can help them to lead a balanced existence. From the literature review it is evident that working mothers difficulties are from multifaceted sources. This research focuses only in Sylhet city with bank employees. Further research can be conducted with other areas of the country regarding other issues about working mothers. There the need for systematic research to pave the way to maintain work-life interface. By keeping the home and outside happy, a working mother gives examples of great dedication and passion for our society. By understanding the issues of stress on working women it may be possible for an organization to manage for best productivity.

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