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**"An Analytical Study of Challenges and Issues Faced by Working Women:
Special Reference to Managers"**

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Abstract

Working women experience various difficulties to balance work and family life. Female employees encountered the difficulties and challenges to give proper time for family commitment to parents, spouse, children, home, and friends. The main objective of this research is to study the challenges and issues faced by working women. The researcher used secondary data to collect data related to this topic. The result of this study indicated that dual role challenges and issues are significantly affected the work-life balance of working women and it also created different reasons which turn into conflict in a work environment and family life.

Introduction-

From the beginning, women were responsible for all the household activities. Women have handled all the responsibilities of child and elder care as well as help in farming to her family. The various social and behavioral norms are affected on the interpersonal relationship of men and women. The discrimination between the role of women and men has affected the work (Stamarski Cailin, Son Hing Leanne (2015). In general, men were the only ones doing work and earned money and women handled all the family and children responsibilities. Now a day's women take responsibility and take part in earning activities because of the high rate of divorce and recession (Suzanne M. Bianchi, 2011). In the recent era, proper management and balancing the dual role of family and work responsibilities was the biggest challenge for every working woman (Reimara Valk a, 2011 and Vinita Shah, 2016). Married female employees experience various difficulties to balance their work and family life. Female employees encountered the difficulties and

challenges to give proper time for family commitment to parents, spouse, children, home, and friends. They were highly recognizing that work-life was affected on personal lives (Shalini, 2007). Work-life balance is a significant factor not only to the employee but also employers because the work-life conflict creates a variety of problems for both employees and employers (Dhas, D.Babin. (2015). Most of the organization can help their employee to enhance mental health with the help of positive work environment and work culture. For this purpose, they utilized flexible work schedules, work from facilities, variation in working hours, etc (Derek Riley, 2012). This study mainly focuses on the perception of women managers concerning key issues and their dual role of balancing career and family responsibilities in the workforce and issues related to work-life balance.

The objective of the Study

The main objective of this research is to study the challenges and issues faced by working women.

Research Methodology

The researcher used secondary data to collect data related to challenges and issues faced by working women. For this purpose, the researcher utilized research papers published in journals, magazines, peer-reviewed journals and collect data from books, reference books, news, etc.

Challenges and issues faced by working women managers-

Every woman plays multiple roles in the family and possesses multiple personalities to effectively manage family responsibilities. Working women continuously encounter time management between personal and working life. Generally, women encounter multitasking and always face difficulties in time management for work and family responsibilities. The following challenges tackle by women in family life because of dual roles.

1. Insufficient time for preparation of Meal or Food

Traditionally women are responsible for household activities, the main responsibilities of women are the preparation of food or meal. Now in a modern and advanced era, most women choose career and family responsibilities equally, then they face difficulties in handle dual roles and prepare all the meals namely breakfast, lunch, dinner, etc for all family members as well as prepare meals for guests also. Most of the working women preferred to prepare food or meal for self and family members. However, some working women managers have high responsibilities of work, they need the help of another family member to the preparation of food or meal.

If family members and husband expect tasty and healthy food, then-wife spend huge time for preparation of meal and food preparation for all the family members. Most of the time wife is not given proper and adequate time for the preparation of the meal then it creates some conflicts between the family member and her. It creates frustration and aggression also affected the psychological and physiological problems in family members mostly in the husband-wife relationship (Dr. Nidhi Tyagi, 2021). The number of working women done a full-time job with family responsibilities for does all the household activities. All these activities increased

the stress level of women as well as all family members (Aarti Verma, 2018). Some previous studies found that the working women form nuclear family faces a variety of problems as compared to joint family. In a joint family, other family members assist and they help in various household activities like help in the preparation of food, care of the child during the preparation of food, or other time. They also help in the purchase of groceries and necessary food items as well as they help in the preparation of the meal. In a nuclear family, working women take assistance from maids and servants because meal preparation taken is a very time-consuming process.

2. Serving food to family members and eat together

Traditionally in India, women in the family would prepare the meal and serve to all family members and they would eat at the last after the entire family members and male eats. In recent days the women's employment increase and working women spend more time off work and traveling, all these factors make it difficult for working women to prepared meals and cooking. Now a day's most working women do not know how to cook. In the market easy, ready to eat, and more affordable price food is available and it's a better option or alternative for working women for prepared food. Some families and working women think that the ready-to-eat food is not hygienic and healthy so they preferred to prepared food and cook all the meals for the family and mostly for children (Wang, M. C., 2014).

Several previous studies showed that mealtimes with family help to create positive energy and maintain healthy relationships with other family members and most of the family set some particular time for eating together and children experience the values and traditions of their family. But most of the working women face problems and difficulties in reach the eating time set my family and most of the time they miss the mealtime with family. The working women were experience problems in serving at their mealtime due to more time spend on office work.

3. Different views, opinions, and debate, disputes of family members

Every individual has their views, perception, opinion, thinking, ideas and mentality. All these factors create every individual different from each other. Traditionally most of the family think that the woman is responsible for all the family responsibilities related to household activities. In recent days women are participated in earning process and go out of the family for a career and profession. Most of the previous studies indicated that a large number of working women face problems related to a different opinion and thinking of family members and it created a variety of problems in the family and work domain. They experience that disputes and arguments because women spend more time for work and less time for family and children. Most of the working women stated that they encounter psychological differences with the better half and other family members. Generally, working women came across the disagreement with husband and in-laws.

Family conflict and disagreement between the family members can occur if family members have disagreements and different opinions, views, beliefs, and attitudes that created a dispute. Most of the time disputes and conflicts can happen when other family members do not understand each other's feelings and they can't help each other, all these factors created misunderstanding and dispute. In various cases, if the conflicts are not resolved then it turns arguments into disputes. The main reason for the dispute between working women and other family members was

inadequate time for domestic work, household activities, caring for the children, etc.

4. Children care

Generally, housework and child care are still recognized as a woman's responsibility. Women take all the responsibilities of caring for and raising children. Working women have more responsibility for the family, caring for children, and responsibilities related to the workplace. A working mother has a huge load and responsibilities to care for the child and balance the work. In childhood, every child needs special attendance from the mother, but a working mother doesn't have another option to care for her child at working time. All these factors increase the absentee and working mother take leaves for caring child. Child care is the biggest factor that influences the work as well as family domain. In a joint family, other family members take care of children at the time of work but in the nuclear family all the child care responsibilities take on the women's shoulders.

Working mother has stressed to reach office on time as well as finished work within time, preparing and dressing of children for school; send children to school on time. Children's sickness is another big reason to take leave or absenteeism of mother. The stress level of a caring child and balancing the work has high in working mothers and this stress reflected the negative impact on the relationship of husband and wife as well as other family members. (Poduval, J., & Poduval, M. (2009). Several working mothers searching a helping hand for caring for children after her and take assistance from other family members in dressing, preparing for school, or sending school. The family support and husband bonding are necessary to handle all the stress level arises from child care.

5. The unexpected arrival of relatives and guests

In India, the guest may refer to a god and give special treatment to them. Sometimes the arrival of guests and relatives created problems for working women due to the time spend for them. Most of the working women prepared their schedule and manage all the family and work responsibilities as per their schedule but unexpected arrivals of guests or relatives created little bit challenges in the management of time for communication, preparation of special food, their entertainment.

6. Celebration and participate in any functions of relatives or friends

The working women experience that participation in any ceremony or function of relatives or friends needs more time for getting ready and reach the destination. Working women are not able to participate in all the functions of friends and relatives due to various work-related issues namely leaves, workload, high work responsibilities, etc. This type of program and function created a disturbance in the time management of working women. If they have not participated in these functions, it also created some misunderstandings and problems in the relationship of the relatives and friends. Most of the working women were encounter the problem of participation in a program of relatives or friends due to work domain and inadequate time for self.

B) Challenges and issues at work-life

Traditionally women handle all the family responsibilities but 21st-century women do not only handle the family responsibilities but also properly handle work responsibilities. Working women are facing huge competition from males and some

issues and challenges in the work domain. They have to be responsible for office work as well as all household activities. Working women take extra effort to balance all the roles in work and family. Sometimes multiple roles created stress and tensions at work and in family life. All these factors, directly and indirectly, affected the relationship with the husband and other family members. The working women are an encounter with a variety of challenges and problems related to work environment, relationship with the boss, colleagues, work time, work responsibilities, etc. working women needs proper balancing of work-life balance to reduce the stress level and properly enjoy the family life and work life. The following challenges and issues faced by working women in the work domain

1. Discrimination at Workplace

Employment discrimination means unfavorable treatment from the employer or boss due to sex, pregnancy, religion, age, disability, genetic information, skin color, or national origin, etc. Women sometimes experience sex and pregnancy discrimination at the workplace. Few organizations give different salaries for men and women for the same work. Sometimes employer discriminates employee at the time of hiring, promotion, transfer, hours of work, leave, training or development and salary etc. Discrimination has negative effects on the performance of women employees and the work environment. Most of the times women experience the poor work environment and culture and its affected-on efficiency of the women managers namely they lose focus on work, take more leaves, increase absenteeism, not concentrated on completion of tasks within time, late arrival or leaving work before time (Neslie A. Etheridge, 2015). Traditionally women are considered to be not capable and not able to get high pay and always compared to male employees and employers not considered their hard work and efforts for work. A number of the time despite **women employees is received less salary** than males for the same work. In recent days also women face discrimination and challenges in getting the right job as per their capabilities and knowledge.

2. Problems during traveling and reach office on time

Several organizations provided their transportation services for employees. If any organization doesn't have transportation facilities, then women preferred to utilize public transportation to reach the office. We frequently hear the news related to misbehavior and misconduct during traveling for office at public transportation or private transportation. The number of women experiences the worst situation during waiting for a bus at the bus stop. Some women encounter eve-teasing or misconduct by male co-passengers. All these factors not only affected the physical but also impact psychologically of the women. The number of women left their job due to long traveling times and harassment and misconduct during traveling.

3. Unsupportive behavior of colleagues or senior as well as the relationship with colleagues or senior

Women compete with men as well as other women in the workplace. Work environment and work culture heavily impacted the relationship and work environment of boss or colleagues. The work environment has directly affected the productivity and efficiency of the women employee. Women spend more time at work and they need support and positive relationship with other colleagues and bosses. But several times they experience huge competition and discrimination from the boss and male colleagues. In India males think that women don't have the

confidence and capabilities to handle the managerial task easily and they don't have the competency to handle administrative work, so they always oppose and demur to decision made by women managers. Unsupportive behavior and negative relationship with bosses or colleagues created difficulties and challenges for women managers to smooth working. Unsupportive relationships with colleagues also created pressure and tension for women, it directly affected the health and mentality of women. Unsupportive colleagues do not help women and always focus on creating difficulties in work.

4. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors which make women feel offended, it included suggestive jokes, comments, staring, unwelcoming touch, requests for sex, sexually explicit posters, pictures, physical contact, SMS, text message, and videos, etc. Sexual harassment at work is the main challenge and problem for working women; it should be happened due to sex discrimination at the workplace (Barbara A. Gutek, 1992). Most of the time women is harassed by a boss or other colleagues but they can't openly tell to anyone and take legal action because of most of the women need job and money, they have some economic issues and problems so they can't leave the job or take any legal action. In recent days almost, all women encounter sexual harassment related to employment status, personal characteristics. Generally, most of the women experiencing unwelcome sexual advances, request sexual favors and received sexually explicit posters, pictures, physical contact, SMS, text message, and videos from the senior, boss, or other male colleagues. Several women experienced that their employers demand sexual favors in return for transfer, promotion, and increase in salary, sometimes it leads to rape and molestation at the workplace.

5. Mental harassment

Generally, women have been mentally harassed from bosses or supervisors at the workplace. There are various types of mental harassment at work, it includes mental torture or added burden or harassment from the boss. Mental harassment involves any disturbing activities at the workplace or your surroundings. Mental harassment is non-physical behavior that controls, punishes, intimidates, sub adjudicates, demeans another person with the help of fear, humiliation, or degradation. If women are working under the male boss or supervisor then most of the time, she experiences the mental torture and harassment from the boss, they give extra work and number of times they find unreasonable mistakes in work, sometimes they deduct unauthorized deduction from salary or payment. Few working women stated that their boss give a short deadline for finished work or did not assign an important project or task due to only gender discrimination, some women managers stated that they experienced negative and verbally abusive language from the boss in front of the other colleagues. Most of the time they had encounter uncomfortable jokes and verbal bullying from bosses or colleagues because most of the men think that women are not capable and they don't have sufficient knowledge about the work as compared to them.

6. Job security and lack of security at the workplace

In the globalized era, most women choose careers and professions for not only economic earning but also for recognition of their knowledge and abilities. They proffered part-time or full-time jobs as per their requirement and capacity to handle

the work as well as family responsibilities. Most of the time it has been seen that *women's* jobs are not secured due to various reasons. *Women* encounter greater insecurity in temporary jobs, part-time jobs. They face a variety of difficulties related to job security at the time of child-caring, pregnancy, and marriage. Sometimes employers cut working hours, payment, benefits, refusing promotion, transfer, or forcing to leave the job due to pregnancy leave or child care leaves. Several part-time or temporary women workers face pregnancy discrimination at the workplace and they are fired or not hire again after delivery or expecting. Most of the private sectors don't give benefits of paid leaves or child care leaves to women employees. After the delivery and child-rearing years, women experienced that it has much harder to get a job or be rehired by previous employers. Night shifts working women experienced sexual abuses or victims of rapes due to improper security of women at night shift. They fall victim to a variety of crimes like abuse from drivers or other male colleagues.

7. Work stress

Work stress is arising due to an imbalance between the demands of work and the abilities of the workers. Generally, it was found that women employees face a variety of difficulties and problems due to work-related factors (Makhija, Priya & Jatty, Gajendra, 2016). Unsupportive management practices and working conditions are the main causes for increase work stress. It included lack of support from management, unrealistic demands of work, unfair treatment, lack of appreciation and transparency low decision latitude and communication, low reward, conflicting roles, etc. (Bhui, K.,2016). Stress at the workplace has adverse effects on the professional life and family life of working women. The number of working women stated that an unsupportive work environment workplace created mental pressure and tension. R Uma Rani, (2014), stated that working women in the age group of 29-32 was highly associated with high-stress level. All the above challenges will add to the stress levels of working women.

Conclusion

This study examined the variety of challenges faced by working women specifically manager level. This study finds out the dual role challenges and issues are significantly affected the work-life balance of the working women and it also created different reasons which turn into conflict in a work environment and family life. Organizational productivity and efficiency are highly dependent on the workers' productivity. Issues and challenges of working women negatively affected the efficiency and productivity of the working women. It is necessary to understand the issues and challenges of women employees and concentrate on minimizing these challenges with the help of providing a better work environment, supportive work factors.

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