A STUDY ON SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM AND ITS IMPACT ON WOMEN EMPLOYEES FOR ACHIEVING WORK FAMILY BALANCE WITH REFERENCE TO IT COMPANIES

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Abstract

The economic pressure, education along with changing trends in the value system and lifestyle has encouraged more number of women to join the corporate environment. Women is India has always been the one in the family to be the sole care taker since ages . And work-life balance of wowmen emplyess has always been the research focus for many researchers , Hence the researcher deliberates work-family balance with respect to family, domestic help and colleagues among working married and unmarried women in Bangalore which is india's largest IT hub. Motivation of selection of this topic is how social support assist the women employees to meet out demands of work as well as family life in Information technology sector. The scope of the study is limited to women employees with regard to Information technology sector alone. Main theme of preparation of this dissertation is to explore the lives of working married and unmarried women who balance work and family responsibilities and identify impact on it. The study adopts correlation analysis to identify the impact of social support system in balancing work and family responsibilities.The study considers three variables which include family, domestic help and colleague. It is observed from the study that family, domestic help and colleague support have an impact on married women employees to achieve work and family life balance. Whereas family and domestic help doesn't impact on unmarried women employees but colleague support does impact to achieve work family balance. As a result Changes in family automatically affects the social support system which inturn affects the work and family balance.

Key Words: Social supports system, Work-family balance, colleague support

Introduction

IT Sector

Development of Information Technology in recent decades, facilitated by the high-speed data communication links, contributed to improved communicative networks bridging the temporal and spatial boundaries and, correspondingly, widened the scope of opportunities for women employees seeking paid work. The onset of Liberalisation and Globalisation in 1990s paved the way for growth of IT industry in India. At present there are 10 million workforces in IT industry in India. . IT industry enjoys natural comparative advantage of 12 hour time-gap with most of the overseas countries, Besides boosting up export earnings for the country and creating a new pool of entrepreneurs, IT sector has its inherent spill over benefit of creating employment potential for a large pool of educated unemployed youths including an attractive option for the women.

Work-Family Balance

Work and family stability, that is an rising concept, considered to be a first-rate issue in organizational research. As such, Western researchers have made high-quality efforts to have a look at the idea of balance among work and family (Berg et al., 2003, Rossi, 2001 Marcinkus et al., Young, 1999). The occupation of women have emerged as a essential factor of how they distribute the profits responsibility uniformly in preference to enhancing their family. Several authors have highlighted gender differences and the stability between work and family and its essential question is that, whether women experience extra work and family conflicts than men?

Work and family balance refers to the quantity of time spent running existence when it comes to the time elapsed away from work. The intention isn't to get the equal amount of time at domestic and work, but the stability of the amount of time spent for an individual or family mainly. In addition, the stability between work and family is basically to lessen the struggle between work and family domain (Frone, 2003; Smith, 2001; Grzywacz and Marks, 2000). The potential to acquire a excellent balance among work and family impacts social nicely-being (Edwards and Rothbard, 2000) and physical health (Frone et al., 1997).

Social Support System

"Social Support is the experience or feeling of having others who care for you, who you can turn to for help in need. Support may come in the form of material or financial assistance or a friend who listens and gives advice. Research has shown that social support is an important coping mechanism during stress, and it also promotes health. People with adequate social support are less likely to get sick than those who are socially isolated" *(Alleydog.com's online psychology glossary: Retrieved from).*

Social support consisted of two categories namely spousal/family support and supervisor/co-worker support. Support from the husband is crucial in being able to balance work and family. Domestic and childcare support are the second way to provide support. Domestic help is the typical source of support in the Indian culture which is widely used is. In addition, women have domestic help from cleaners, cooks and maids that reduced their time spent on household tasks, which, in turn, facilitated the WLB (ReimaraValk and Vasanthi Srinivasan,2011).

Studies in different components of the sector have examined the relationship between social support with pressure (Banyard and Graham-Bermann, 1993), struggle in spouse roles (Aryee, 1992), pleasure at organization and (Marcinkus et al., 2006), health (Cohen and Wills, 1985) and the operating family controversy (Erdwins et al., 2001). While the prevailing study considers the balance between work and family with family, domestic help and colleagues support.

Review of Literature

(**ReimaraValk and Vasanthi Srinivasan, 2011**). Labour markets in India are significantly changing which has witnessed the entry of women IT professionals in the rapidly growing Information Technology sector. The study further made an attempt to recognize how family and work related factors influence the work family balance of Indian women software professionals. Social support is one of the six themes derived. As per the outcome, it is identified that women need domestic and child care support to balance work and family whereas supervisor and co-worker support in informal way.

(**Thrivenikumari and Rama Devi, 2013**). Author developed a conceptual framework based on review of literature of past studies. The Study concludes that recognize the women difficulties that leads them to formulated organisation policies to eradicate issues in near future.

(**NiharikaDoble and Supriya, 2013**). Author expresses their view with regard to work life balance diagonally with genders. Chi square test states that there is a supportive work environment which ultimately reduce work imbalance in an organisation. Flexible work timings, home working, child care facilities and working as part time introduced to create supportive environment in an organisation. This increases productivity which enhances work life and family life in an effective manner.

(**Madhurayadav, 2016**).Author investigates the association between work life balance with regard to gender, age and experience. With the help of chi-square test, it is identified that (0.003) there is high level of significance among work life balance and gender. Chi square results of 0.966 clearly represent that there is no association between work life balance and age as well as experience**.**

(Rincyv.Mathew and Panchanatham, 2011). Women entrepreneurs faces like health, work -family problems which ultimately affects managing time properly, long hours of working in a company. Lack of support is the major problem for women entrepreneurs that create work life family conflict. It is revealed that married women entrepreneurs' faces more problems related to work and family balance**.**

(Vijayakumarbharathi, padma mala and sonalibhattacharya, 2015). In organisation, work life balance is considered as a separate which is not core. So it is necessary to include this as a core aspect to create mutual understanding between employer and employee which ultimately improves productivity of the organization.

(Anuradha and MrinaliniPandey, 2016). As per this study, author adopts Anova, Cronbach Alpha, descriptive statistics and regression to know work life balance of employee. Thus it is identified that increase in age group increases the work life balance. Healthy work life balance create postive impact on job satisfaction.

(**Ma li and Yin Jielin, 2012).** According to the author, descriptive, cluster and anova adopted. There is a good relationship between employer and organisation. Different perceptions pave the way to balance work and family in the forms of improve productivity, lower absenteeism and high loyalty. It is observed from the study that there is a positive spill over and negative spill over is in this study.

(Divina M. Edralin, 2012). Positive spill over represents good reputation whereas negative spill over consists of role overload and long working hours. Women entrepreneurs learned to manage work and family responsibilities to create an effective environment in both sides encouraged to adopt innovative work-life balance strategies like strengthen support from spouse and family.

(GeorgetaPanisora and MihaelaSaerban, 2013). Author framed Research hypothesis in which marital status is quite different from work life balance. Introducing awareness program not only promotes work life balance but also treat married and unmarried women employees equally.

(Hayman, 2005). According to the study, highest number of (71%) respondents is women. As per factor analysis, factors like work interference with personal life, personal life interference with work and work life enhancement have lower mood than desired value. In the modern world, good practice of HRM is necessary to make effective work life than non effective work lives.

Statement of Research Problem

This study was developed to have a better understanding of women fulfilling the role in family as well as in work life. This estimates how working women get support to carry out office work along with family work and to perform well.

Balancing personal and work life for many women is very challenging and stressful which is increasing the pressure and demands placed on working women. Women are more likely empowered by how family extends support in terms of decision making. How much support does Domestic help spread out in taking care of working women to carryout household activities.

The study further estimates weather colleagues extend support to achieve work and family life balance. By analyzing these three variables, researcher understands which of these three has a strong impact on working women for achieving work family balance.

Problem questions

- How women employees get support from family members to balance work and family?
- How domestic support from maid influence women employees to balance work and family?
- What is the support they get from colleagues?
- Does the social support system have an impact on married and unmarried women employees for achieving work family balance?

Aim

To determine what are all the impacts get from social support as well as how women employees balancing work and life responsibilities

Objectives

- To explore and identify the variables of social support system for achieving Work family balance in women
- To analyse the impact of social support system and the correlation between the variables effecting the Work Family balance
- To suggest the ways in achieving work and family life balance through social support system

Scope

New emerging trends alarm women to a new lifestyle which paves the way for women to extend their life in professional sector. Hence, the scope of the study is limited to working women employees only. This considers Information technology sector alone.

A better and deeper understanding has taken to evaluate how working married and unmarried women get support from variables like family along with domestic help and colleague.

Main objective of this dissertation is to explore the lives of working married and unmarried women who balance work and family responsibilities and identify impact on it.

Further the study estimates that what kind of support women get to meet out both work and family demands. In addition to the above, the study focuses on improving women performance in both work and family life with the aid of social support system.

Methodology

Sampling

The respondents were chosen on the basis of **Convenience sampling**. The reason for choosing this sampling method used is because of the time constraints, lack of knowledge about the entire universe. The survey is estimated to be conducted among 50 women employees from different software companies in Bangalore.

Research Instruments Used

In this study, data collection is purely based on survey method. Questionnaire used as a tool. A questionnaire is simply a 'tool' for collecting and recording information about a particular issue of interest. In this research, five point rating scale is adopted.

Tools and Techniques Data is been analyzed using statistical tool correlation in SPSS software to study the relationship between the two identified variables.

Data Analysis and Interpretation The analysis part is divided into married and unmarried responses
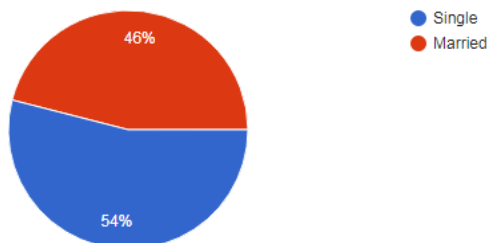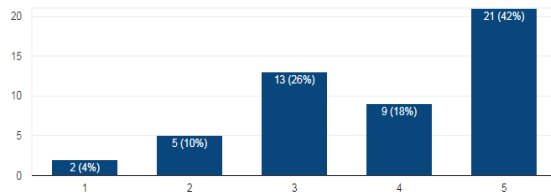

Figure 4.1: Marital Status

Married Woman

The following chart represents that the women employees are able to perform well at the work only because of family support:

a. Family

H0: Family doesn't play an important role in balancing work family responsibilities of working married women

H1: Family plays an important role in balancing work family responsibilities of working married women

TABLE 4. 1: Correlation output of Family (Married Woman)

Correlations

		VAR00001	VAR00002
VAR00001	Pearson Correlation	1	.455*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.029
	N	23	23
VAR00002	Pearson Correlation	.455*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.029	
	N	23	23

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

VAR00001-Social support

VAR00002-Family

The Pearson correlation coefficient, r, can take a range of values from +1 to -1. A value of 0 indicates that there is no association between the two variables. A value greater than 0 indicates a positive association; that is, as the value of one variable increases, so does the value of the other variable.We have Pearson correlation(r) as +.455. The + sign represents that the variables are dependent on each other i.e., if work life balance depends on family.

As we can see .455 is greater than .005, by this we can related that the two variables social support and family support are strongly correlated.   Here the significance p, is lesser than 0.5

i.e., p <0.5 and indicates that the coefficient is significantly different from 0. Hence, H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. Thus, Family plays an important role in balancing work family responsibilities of working married women.

b. Domestic help

H0: Domestic help does not impact on balancing work family responsibilities of working married women

H1: Domestic help does have an impact on balancing work family responsibilities of working married women

TABLE 4. 2: Correlation output of Domestic help   (Married Woman)

→ Correlations

Correlations

		VAR00001	VAR00002
VAR00001	Pearson Correlation	1	.402
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.057
	N	23	23
VAR00002	Pearson Correlation	.402	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.057	
	N	23	27

VAR00001-Social support

VAR00002-Domestic help

We have Pearson correlation(r) as +.402. The + sign represents that the variables are dependent on each other.

As we can see .402 is greater than .005, by this we can related that the two variables social support and domestic help are strongly correlated.   Here the significance p, is lesser than 0.5 i.e., p <0.5 and indicates that the coefficient is significantly different from 0. Hence, H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. Thus, Domestic help does have an impact on balancing work family responsibilities of working married women.

c. Colleague support

H0: Colleague supports don't have an impact on balancing work family responsibilities of working married women.

H1: Colleague supports has an impact on balancing work family responsibilities of working married women

TABLE 4. 3:Correlation output of Colleague support (Married Woman)

→ **Correlations**

Correlations

		VAR00001	VAR00002
VAR00001	Pearson Correlation	1	.524[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.010
	N	23	23
VAR00002	Pearson Correlation	.524[*]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	
	N	23	23

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

VAR00001-Social support

VAR00002-Colleague

We have Pearson correlation(r) as +.524. The + sign represents that the variables are dependent on each other.

As we can see .524 is greater than .005, by this we can related that the two variables social support and colleague are strongly correlated.   Here the significance p, is lesser than 0.5 i.e., p <0.5 and indicates that the coefficient is significantly different from 0. Hence, H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted.   Thus,Colleague supports have an impact on balancing work family responsibilities of working married women.

Unmarried Woman

a.   Family

H0: Family support doesn't play an important role in balancing work family responsibilities of working unmarried women

H1: Family support plays an important role in balancing work family responsibilities of working unmarried women

TABLE 4. 4:Correlation output for family (Unmarried Woman)

Correlations

		VAR00001	VAR00002
VAR00001	Pearson Correlation	1	-.039
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.845
	N	27	27
VAR00002	Pearson Correlation	-.039	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.845	
	N	27	27

We have Pearson correlation(r) as -.039. The - sign represents that the variables are Independent on each other.

As we can see -0.039 is lesser than .005, by this we can stated that the two variables social support and domestic help are strongly uncorrelated. Here the significance p, is greater than 0.5 i.e., p <0.5 and indicates that the coefficient is significantly different from 0. Hence, H0 is accepted and H1 is rejected. Thus, Family support doesn't play an important role in balancing work family responsibilities of working unmarried women.

b. Domestic help

H0: Domestic help does not have an impact on balancing work family responsibilities of working unmarried women

H1: Domestic help does have an impact on balancing work family responsibilities of working unmarried women

TABLE 4. 5:Correlation output for domestic help (Unmarried Woman)

➔ **Correlations**

Correlations		VAR00001	VAR00002
VAR00001	Pearson Correlation	1	-.303
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.125
	N	27	27
VAR00002	Pearson Correlation	-.303	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.125	
	N	27	27

We have Pearson correlation(r) as -.303. The - sign represents that the variables are independent on each other.

As we can see -0.303 is lesser than .005, by this we can stated that the two variables social support and domestic help are strongly uncorrelated. Here the significance p, is lesser than 0.5 i.e., p <0.5 and indicates that the coefficient is significantly different from 0. Hence, H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. Thus, Domestic help does not have an impact on balancing work family responsibilities of working unmarried women.

c. Colleague support

H0: Colleague supports don't have an impact on balancing work family responsibilities of working unmarried women.

H1: Colleague supports has an impact on balancing work family responsibilities of working unmarried women

**TABLE 4. 6:Correlation output for Colleague support (Unmarried Woman)**

➜ **Correlations**

Correlations

		VAR00001	VAR00002
VAR00001	Pearson Correlation	1	.176
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.380
	N	27	27
VAR00002	Pearson Correlation	.176	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.380	
	N	27	27

We have Pearson correlation(r) as +.176. The + sign represents that the variables are dependent on each other.

As we can see .175 is greater than .005, by this we can related that the two variables social support and colleague are strongly correlated.   Here the significance p, is lesser than 0.5 i.e., p <0.5 and indicates that the coefficient is significantly different from 0. Hence, H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted.   Thus,a Colleague support has an impact on balancing work family responsibilities of working unmarried women.

Findings

The following bar chart represents the number of respondents who believe Social Support System helps in balancing Work and Family life
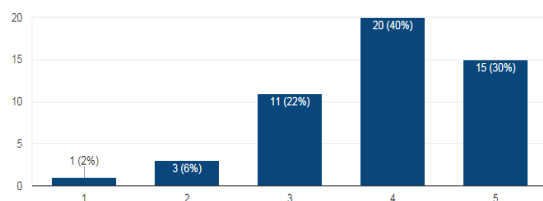
From the analysis, it is observed that 70% of respondents' agree that Social support system helps in balancing work and family. Respondent of 42% strongly agree that family support paves the way for the women employees to accomplish the official task in good manner.

As per analysis conducted It is observed from the study that family, domestic help and colleague support have an impact on married women employees to achieve work and family life balance. Whereas family and domestic help doesn't impact on unmarried women employees but colleague support does impact to achieve work family balance.

As a result Changes in family automatically affect the social support system. This affects working women to gain work and family balance in IT sector.

Suggestions

- According to the research, Domestic help is important for working married women. Due to both domestic and work pressures, employees will be feeling stressed. The employer should be able to recognize the difference in employees. Hence a proper domestic arrangement is important for a women to be stress free in the workplace

- The study shows that colleague support has an impact on both married and unmarried women employees for achieving Work family balance. According to the study, the subordinates should understand and cooperate with each other. Conflicts between employees can cause low performance in work. The team leader should be able to spot the conflicts among employees and try to resolve the conflicts.

- Apart from all the above suggestions, there are few suggestions derived from the interviews and literature reviews:

  a. Allowing 'Flexitime' is one of the best way to encourage a healthy work family balance

  b. According to 'nytimes', women employees are 13% more productive working from home than in office. Supporting telecommuting will help the employees in taking care of their personal needs but still the work will be done.

  c. The 'Mental health foundation' says that, when employees working for long hours, 34% feel anxious, 27% feel depressed, and 58% feel terrible. So the employer should encourage efficient work instead of long hours work.

  d. Bringing 'home to work' is one of the best way to maintain balance between work and family. For example: 'LinkedIn bring your Parents day' where employees are encouraged to invite their families.

Conclusions

It is revealed from the study that Women are permitted to work in a company mainly with regard to reputation as well as fame of the company which gives a pride in the society. It is not necessary to take a break from the work to proceeds family activities. Further the purpose of the study was to test what are all the effects gained from social support systems in achieving work and family life responsibilities in Information technology sector.

In order to ascertain the influence of social support system, aspects like family, domestic help and colleague is taken into account. Thus, it is observed from the study that married woman has an impact over the above three variables which ultimately affects women to achieve work and family life balance whereas for single woman family and domestic help doesn't have any impact but colleague has an influence over work and family responsibilities. As a result, if married woman faces any changes in variables like family, domestic help and colleague support automatically affect the social support system. This affects working women to gain work and family balance in IT sector.

Suggestions for future directions

The study is concerned with the limitations:

The study is limited to Information technology sector only with limited sample size considered. The future study can be done involving different sectors and more sample size.

The study is limited to only three variables, family, domestic help and colleague support. The future study can be done using different variables

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