

**A STUDY OF INFLUENCE OF FAMILY ON THE
CAREER LIFE STAGES AND RETENTION OF
FEMALES IN SELECT INDIAN ORGANISATIONS IN
LUCKNOW**



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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to identify the implications of influence of family on the career of females and the challenges of work-life balance and its impact on the career development of female employees in the service sector. The study is also trying to identify the strategies that women employees may use to achieve better balance in their lives. This topic is examined in the context of the influences on, and outcomes of, the lack of balance between work and personal life, as well as the impact on performance and well-being. The roles of work-life balance's four components (work-to-life conflict, life-to-work conflict, work-to-life facilitation, and life-to-work facilitation) in the relationship between support and employee outcomes were examined.

Organizational efforts at providing a supportive work environment are appreciated as they go a long way towards enhancing work-life balance. In the post-liberalization context, Indian organizations are trying to enable work-life balance through initiatives including flex times, part-time work, provision of childcare facilities etc. These initiatives are quite similar to those that are provided in other countries. No doubt, this is a promising trend. Yet, the respondents in this sample have reported their inability to balance work and home. In the light of this observation, the researcher suggests the need to improve work-life balance practices to enable employees to balance their lives. This will ensure a congenial workplace for employees and make work more meaningful to them.

The study has been exploratory in nature and has used both primary and secondary sources of data. Non-probability sampling has been used. For data collection, various techniques such as questionnaire, informal conversation, review of all available literature, reference materials etc. have been used. Five hundred and ten questionnaires were distributed to different types of organizations falling under service sector viz. Banking and Financial services, Hospitals, Hotels, IT & ITES and Education and other. After eliminating the invalid questionnaires, 263 valid questionnaires were used for further analysis. The findings of this study suggested that three kinds of support (organizational support, family support, and self-support) were positively related to female employees' work-life balance. However, no

significant relationship was found between the availability and usage of the work-life balance policies and employees' work-life balance. More importantly, it was found that work-life balance and four components mediate the relationship between supervisor support and all employee outcomes. The relationship between employees' awareness of the policies that organization offered and favorable employee outcomes is also mediated by work-life balance.

Interestingly, the availability and usage of the policies were not found to be related to either employees' better work-life balance or favorable employee outcomes. It is thus recommended that emphasizing supervisor support might be a better option than introducing various work-life balance policies for employees to achieve a better work-life balance. Otherwise, the work-life balance policies offered have to meet employees' needs. Research has shown that work/life balance policies can offer a range of benefits for employers and employees. However, research has highlighted that simply having work-life balance policies may not be enough for employers and employees to enjoy their potential benefits. This study examined the most prominent family related factors which were the possible barriers for female employees to access work-life balance policies available in their workplace. Data from this study was drawn from respondents of major five types of companies under service sector. The focus of discussions revealed that while each organization had various formal and informal work-life balance policies available, there were a significant number of barriers prevalent in workplaces which made it difficult for employees to actually use these policies. For work-life balance policies to work well, organizations need to attend to the possible barriers to policy access prevalent in their workplace which would in turn increase the retention rate of the organization.

ROLE OF FAMILIAL INFLUENCE

The influence of the family starts from the occupational choice and there after it continues till the last stage whether it is career satisfaction or career exit. The problem of balancing work and family are major concerns for employees and employers. These problems may manifest themselves in the form of stress, absenteeism, turnover, lower job commitment, errors and ultimately, lower productivity, which tends to cause a great loss to the organization for which one is working. Family

responsibilities can be a restriction on employee's advancement through an organization, either if they actually inhibit time available to an employee for work-related tasks and activities or if they are perceived by decision makers to inhibit employees' commitment to their work.

One of the bitter consequences of one's inability to balance work and family demand is increasing the level of work-life conflicts experienced by employed mothers. Work-life conflict occurs when an individual has to perform multiple roles in different avatars that require time, energy and commitment. Family interference with work occurs when family roles and responsibilities hinder performance at work. Example a child's illness can prevent a parent from going to work. Work is the exertion of effort and application of knowledge and skills to achieve a purpose. Most people work not only to earn a living by making enough money but also to gain the satisfaction it brings in the light of ensuring the said satisfaction, business organizations are putting in measures to ensure an effective work-life balance. Women's career development or progression is different and more complex than men's because of role expectations about both paid work and family life. With the career of women, about five elements come to play; career preparation (expectations and socialization, as well as education); opportunities in society, the influence of marriage; pregnancy and child care; timing and age. Though it is very difficult to combine all these elements, women generally take responsibility for family and work. As a result, many women regard successful juggling of these simultaneous rather than sequential demands as a considerable accomplishment. While most women struggle with combining work with family life as a result of differences in physical makeup and ego, others are committed to paid employment and family work is possible for them. This increasing man like the role of women in the society is good or bad only time can tell.

THE MEANING OF FAMILY-WORK CONFLICT (FWC)

Family-work conflict means the conflict that arises when a meeting of family demands by an individual creates disturbance in his/her work-life. Work-life conflict significantly depends on what an individual's values are regarding the roles they have to perform in work and family life. Work-family conflict is a two-dimensional construct; work to family conflict arises when work interrupts family life while family

to work conflict arises when family obligations interrupt work (Frone, 2000). Work-family interference is related to family and work characteristics such as time spent on child care, family, work demand flexibility, and working hour which is higher for parents (Pleck (1979). To Keith & Schafer (1980), the sources of work-family role strain among people with job and families were a number of children, their ages and working hours per week among others.

FEMALE'S PARTICIPATION IN WORKFORCE AND FAMILY INFLUENCE

Indian Studies on employed married women have reported an economic need as the primary reason for their employment (Srivastava 1978, Ramanna and Bombawale 1984). An increasing number of women are beginning to work full time and aspire to climb the same ladders as their male counterparts (Davidson and Cooper, 1984). Increased awareness of having fewer children compared to olden days has resulted in women getting more free time where they can opt for jobs outside, and it is not just seeking the jobs and careers. Indian women of all social classes have entered professional occupations. While the entry of unmarried women into professional occupations may be relatively less problematic, the case of married working women who have multiple roles to fulfil results in strains and tensions within herself owing to role conflict.

The employed woman who has to divide her energies between the working world and her traditional role as a woman faces adjustment problems peculiar to her Gender. The married woman has both home and job responsibilities somewhat different from those of her male counterpart. Considering that Indian society is quite conservative, though women take up employment they are expected to give priority to the household roles than to their employment roles. According to a UN study (2010), women in India approximately spend 35 hours each week on household chores and family responsibilities against 4 hours per week by men. Striking a balance between home and career is one of the biggest challenges faced by the women workforce resulting in negative consequences on family life and work-life.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

The career progression in the case of women around the world is not linear, unlike men, and retaining them as the workforce is becoming a much-debated subject. A woman's career has a far more skewed route, which includes taking time out, working part-time, reduced hours or flex-time for a number of years. Primarily out of domestic/personal reasons.

At every step of career progression, a woman is forced into a situation leading to either exit or get pushed out. The reasons are familiar i.e. childcare, unfair share of domestic chores, gender bias at work and family, extreme work conditions, security etc. In recent decades, a growing number of women have entered the workforce but very few make it to either middle or top.

A multitude of factors contributes to the low proportion of women in senior roles like managers, directors, and senior officials. In many developed countries, women are the majority of workers while in some countries, are making good progress in occupying more professional jobs. Many developing countries are also scoring well on female representation in senior positions.

Despite improving statistics around the world, there is still significant ground to cover by Indian organizations for increasing the penetration and seniority of women in the workplace as Female labor participation is still low and in an alarming state. As expected, the gender diversity gap in Indian organizations is more pronounced as women move up through the ranks.

This study has established an inquiry regarding myriad ways in which one's family and personal life can impact a women's career. It has tried to find out the Indian organizations' strategies pertinent to retention of female employees.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the influence of family on the career of female employees.
2. To study the influence of work life balance challenges on females.
3. To study the role of marriage in the career of females.
4. To study the effect of having children on the career of females.

5. To study the effect of flexible working practices offered by the organizations on the career of females
6. To study the effect of spousal support on the career advancement of females.
7. To study the influence of family on relocations of females.
8. To study the effect of family commitments on career satisfaction.

RESEARCH DESIGN, WORK PLAN AND METHODOLOGY

The research design is a general plan of how a researcher intends to go about in answering their research questions. It guides the researcher in planning and implementing the study in a way that is likely to achieve the intended goals. (Saunders, et al, 2009, p.136). The study was exploratory in nature and used both primary and secondary sources of data. Non-probability sampling was used. For data collection various techniques such as questionnaire, informal conversation, review of all available literature, reference material etc. was done.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Is there any influence of family on the career of female employees
2. Is there any influence of work life balance challenges on females
3. Is there any role of marriage in the career of females
4. Is there any effect of having children on the career of females
5. Is there any effect of flexible working practices offered by the organizations on the career of females
6. Is there any effect of spousal support on the career advancement of females
7. Is there any the influence of family on relocations of females
8. Is there any effect of family commitments on career satisfaction

SAMPLE DESIGN AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The study has been initiated to evaluate the influence of family on the career of females and who are employed in the service sector and their perception in Lucknow City. Appropriately, the research design of this study is within-subject design with repeated measures in the form of questionnaires, given to each of the employees during meetings of the company. A total of 510 questionnaires were administered to potential participants. Out of distributed questionnaires 342 were returned. After preliminary screening, a sample set of 263 participants was found suitable for further analysis. The relationship and the effect of family on the career life stages of of the females employed in the service sector have been studied. A convenient and purposive sampling was used for the study. The study has been conducted on a sample of 263 employees. The participants were chosen as a purposive convenient sample.

Sample Area

Uttar Pradesh is the most populated state of India and Lucknow being the largest city and capital is the key economic base in north India being a prominent trading city. Important service sectors of the state including tourism, education, health services, aerospace, finance, pharmaceuticals, design, and culture. Key industries in Lucknow are distillery chemicals, machine tools, aeronautics, furniture, chikan embroidery on textiles, education, IT and software, and research and development (R&D) have their offices in the city.

With overpopulation, declining space and resources, and increasing costs, doing business in metropolitan cities are becoming demanding, smaller towns and cities have the potential to become the new investment hubs, especially if they are well-connected and have strong industrial and educational sectors. As Lucknow meets both these conditions as it is a fast-growing with its selection as a future smart city.

Defining Population

A total of 20 institutions were identified for sample selection out of which 10 institutions are from public sector including hospitals and banks and rest 10 institutions are from private sectors including schools and BPOs.

Elements	Women
Sampling Unit	Women Employed in Service Sector
Extent	Lucknow City, Uttar Pradesh, India

Data Collection

The data for the undertaken research is collected through both the sources viz. primary as well as secondary.

- 1. Primary Data-** The primary data was collected through *structured questionnaire* and unstructured personal interviews of few respondents as well as HR persons.
- 2. Secondary Data-** The secondary data is collected through following sources: Books on Indian Economy, Human Resource Management, Organizational Behavior, Women at the workplace, Women empowerment, Women entrepreneurship, Work-Life Balance, Gender Disparity, Research Methodology, Statistics and much more.

Besides the book, a lot of many Periodicals, Manuals, and Newspapers have been referred by the researcher. Many Databases paid as well as open source are used by the researcher. Many Internet Sources especially for reviewing research work related to researcher's topic on international perspective have been used.

Respondents- Female employees in the service sector in Lucknow city with an emphasis on five important segments viz. Banking and Financial Services, Hospitals, Hotels, IT & ITES and Education. Besides these segments also few respondents are from other segments of service sector which the researcher has placed in another segment.

Distribution and Collection of Questionnaire

Questionnaires were distributed to female employees in different organizations falling under service sector in Lucknow City through mentor, friends, relatives, and students and also personally. A total of 510 questionnaires distributed were returned. Out of this questionnaire, 263 were considered for the analysis purpose owing to the treatment of the missing data values. Total 79 questioners received were omitted due reasons of incompleteness and irrelevance. The cover letter was attached to inform the

participants about the purpose of this research. Participants were fully voluntarily responded and respondents were assured of the strict confidentiality of their information and responses.

Structure of the Survey Questionnaire

The survey is designed to produce quantitative information. Most questions are ‘close-ended’ – respondents have to pick one of the available answers. This makes it easier to process the information. The survey questionnaire contains two parts, A and B; part A recorded the demographic details of the respondents. Since all the respondents were females employing working in some organizations the demographic details recorded were name, organization name & service sector involved, age, marital status, education qualification, experience with previous and present organisation, level of management, duration with the present organization, number of family members and type of family and number of children. Part B of the questionnaire consist 28 statements related to effect of family on career of females. These psychographic variables represent the effect of different factors related to family on different stages of career of females as per the objectives. The scale was based on Fouad and et al.’s Family Influence Scale (2010). Likert type five-point rating scale is used for getting responses to different statements in the questionnaire.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was done in two parts, the descriptive analysis and inferential analysis. Various tools like frequency analysis, percentages, pie charts, bar charts, graphs were employed to perform the descriptive analysis. First of all codification of variables was done followed by preparation of **master charts** in SPSS 20 because each question was treated as a separate variable. MS Excel Software is used along with SPSS to analyse the data and draw figures, tables and charts. Inferential analysis was done to test the proposed hypotheses in the study. One-Sample Chi Square Test of Equal Occurrences is applied to test the sub hypotheses related to the objectives and to measure the degree to which a series of observed frequencies deviate from the expected ones. After the chi square tests, the additive property of Chi Square value is applied to test the main hypotheses of the objectives. The inferential analysis also employs factor analysis mainly to quantify different measures in the study and to find

out any latent factors in the observed data. Listing of dependent and independent **variables or factors** was done to enumerate different factors. Multiple linear regression technique was used to test the relationship between dependent variable and various independent variables or factors extracted in factor analysis. The details of data analysis are duly discussed in the next chapter.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- ❖ Significantly more number of women agree with the perception that there is considerable influence of family on career of female employees.
- ❖ More number of women agree with the perception that there is considerable effect of work life balance challenges on career of females employees.
- ❖ More number of women agree with the perception that there is considerable effect of marriage on the career of females.
- ❖ The study failed to conclude that significantly more number of women have the perception that there is considerable effect of marriage on the career of females. Hence it may be said that though majority of women agree with the perception but not significantly more number of women believe there is considerable effect of having children on the career of females.
- ❖ It is concluded that a significantly more number of women's have the perception that there is considerable influence of flexible working practices offered by the organizations.
- ❖ The study failed to conclude that significantly more number of women's have the perception that there is considerable effect of spousal support on the career advancement of females.
- ❖ Significantly more number of women's have the perception that there is considerable effect of family on relocations of females. Hence it may be said that significantly more number of women agree with the perception that there is considerable effect of family on relocations of females.
- ❖ A significantly more number of women's have the perception that there is considerable effect of family commitments on career satisfaction of females.

SUGGESTIONS /RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggestions to the Employees

From the findings of this research some suggestions have been outlined so as to enable the employees to achieve a better balance between their family and work commitments. Time management can be the key to strike a positive balance. Use of technology in such a manner that it may assist the employees in saving time. A conscious decision to separate work time from personal time needs to be made. Bolstering the support system at work and family front can also be very helpful. Organizing work and family activities can be very helpful. Use of WLB initiatives given to employees provide flexibility and helps to ensure that dependents are cared for whilst employees are at work.

Suggestions for the organizations

Providing Flexibility by the organizations in for of Flextime, Job Sharing, Compressed Work Schedules, Telecommuting Abbreviated Schedule or part time Work, to employees can be a very useful way in which employees can continue to fulfill family commitments along with work schedules.

Specialized leave policies in the form of Paid maternity leave, Paid leave to care for sick family members and Sabbatical leave can be a very useful tool to retain the talented staff and at the same time achieve more organization as well as career satisfaction from the employees.

Dependent care benefits that include On site/near site company childcare, Program for emergency care of ill dependents and Childcare programs during school vacation will have greater benefits in the form of reduced absenteeism, reduced turnover, improved morale, higher productivity, greater quality of work.

LIMITATIONS

This study serves to contribute to the existing literature about the role of family influence on career related choices among specific populations of females. Among the studies that have researched family influence, the Indian studies and samples were very limited. There is always a room for improvement and this research study is not

an exception. The results of the study are affected by these responses and are subject to varying in a bigger or different sample. A survey with questionnaires is always subject to the respondent's biases.

IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has several implications. For instance, there is limited research on the influence of family on the overall career development process of females in India. Therefore, it is important to continue examining these constructs with samples from other areas to gain a better understanding of how they make career-related choices. The result of the study suggests that family plays an important role in career decision making for Females in the service sector and further research should examine the nature of that influence over other sector and population. Findings from this study may encourage researchers to think critically about how pertinent factors, such as family influence, impact career decision making, especially for working women.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study have practical implications for organizations which are interested in implementing family-friendly policies in the near future. The literature review demonstrated the outcomes associated with career satisfaction and turnover intention towards the women employees. Family-friendly policies such as five-day work week and employee assistance programs have a significant impact on female employees' career satisfaction and turnover intention. The benefits of adopting more family-friendly familiar policies leads to productive workforce so crucial for performance maximization and also to act as and a differentiator of sort. Meanwhile, the finding generated out of this study further supports the Governments statutory preamble of women friendly workplace persuading organizations through legislative to play a proactive role in developing more women friendly policies and their implementation. It is further hoped that these results encourage further investigation and applications of friendly familiar for women policies in the organizations.