

**WORK – FAMILY CONFLICT AND ITS EFFECTS ON INDIAN WOMEN  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP – A CONCEPTUAL STUDY****Ms. Rachel Pawar**

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**Abstract** - In the current era, women are given an opportunity to explore new horizon of their potential. Entrepreneurship which has pre-dominantly been a “Man’s Domain” has a lot of women creating a benchmark position for themselves. However, majority of women are still are burdened heavily with responsibilities of “household” and their aspiration succumb to the gender roles. Various government reports and research studies have shown that women entrepreneurial contribution is an untapped avenue for accelerated economic growth. Thus the study aims to highlight from the available literature the relevance of work family conflict and its effects on the state of women entrepreneurship in India, further proposing suggestions that might curb the conflict and improve women entrepreneurial state in the country.

**Keywords:** Women Entrepreneurship, Work – Family Conflict (WFC), Antecedents and Causes of Work – Family Conflict.

**1 INTRODUCTION**

Women in India have mostly found themselves as the flag bearers of the house hold. It is ironic that the women who support and put at stake everything for the needs and wants of their family; often find the members of their family an obstacle in their career progression. All the while dealing with the gender aspect involved that are additional challenge for the women as they step up and grow in their desired industry. Taking entrepreneurship as a focal area for this study, various study state that women-owned businesses have lower sales turnover, fewer employees, serving mostly local markets as compared to business owned by men. (Muhammad Azam Roomi Et. al., 2009) Women entrepreneurs have also been found less ambitious to grow their businesses and more apprehensive about the success of their businesses than men entrepreneurs. (Aaron Makafui Ametorwo, 2016).

A causal for this is the association of this niche with male dominant characteristics. Men may be still viewed as default business leaders, affirming the “think-manager-think-male” mindset (Isabel Cuadrado et al., 2015). The stakeholders often apply gender stereotypes to leadership giving in to the stereotype - women “take care,” men “take charge.” (Catalyst, 2005). Further the predominant social norms, especially in a country like ours expects women to first and foremost look after their home. In fact, many Indian women often do assume greater responsibility at home and spend, on average, five times as much time than men on housework, household care, and other unpaid activities. (Sabrina Korreck, 2019).

Moreover, another reason for the slow growth rate of women-owned businesses is that “women themselves consider growth as a risk which may be financial or social and may come from exogenous or endogenous sources; consequently they try to be more risk averse, more careful and conservative, purposely striving for a controlled and manageable rate of growth” (Cliff, 1998). It also evident through research, that women on purpose choose a slower growing and non-expanding businesses due to of various barriers that emerge from various psychological and societal backgrounds. Studies revealed that, women often have reduced financial, family and societal support structure to expand their ventures. Also, as women progress in age and relationship status they face more problems for example married women with children also face a problem due to the lack of adequate child care that forces them to keep their ventures smaller and more convenient.

Women entrepreneurs however are these days trying to break through these barriers to carve a niche for themselves. Every entrepreneurial journey begins with opportunity recognition, further there is opportunity evaluation and it concludes with opportunity exploitation. As per Volery, (2007) “There are four factors that affect this core entrepreneurial process: first, the psychological characteristics of the entrepreneur, such as the need for achievement, locus of control, and risk propensity; second, the information and knowledge that the entrepreneur possesses; third, the creative processing skills of the entrepreneur which afford them “the ability to analyze an opportunity and transform it into a commercially exploitative business idea”; and fourth, the entrepreneur’s “cognitive

heuristics” or their ability to deal with “new problems which require quick and efficient judgments and decisions”.

This taxing and contrasting demand of work and family domains is what is termed as Work – Family Conflict and it would be moot to aspire for the women growth and independence and her contribution to the growth of economy and without understanding the various roadblocks in the path of her career progression. Hence, this study will help to build a conceptual understanding, focusing on the ground level work – family conflict that women entrepreneurs face while juggling work and family.

### 1.1 Rationale of the Study

A 2017, report of the World Bank stated that India can grow in double digits if more women participate in the product line of the Indian economy. Regardless of exploration WFC can be stated as one of the key reason holding women behind.

Addressing these issues and helping women secure a stand in the society and become independent it is imperative for the policy makers and other stakeholder to understand the importance of reducing the work family conflict so as to ensure that women can contribute equally to the growth of the country’s economy.

In a country like India where women are often put into gender roles and stereotypes without a consideration of her commitment and priority to her career and ambitions understanding the concept of WFC will help loosen up the string around women growth and progression.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 State of Women Entrepreneurship in India

Women constitute around half of the total population of India. But, as per The Economist, women in India are less likely to be a part of the earning population than any other country in the G20. The Indian women contribute to only one-sixth of the country’s economic output. If they joined the workforce in greater strength, India will be one of the richer nations of the world. (Anjana Bose, 2019). Government of India identifies women entrepreneurs as “an enterprise owned and controlled by women having a min. financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% of the employment generated in the enterprise to women”.

Following stats area a clear representation of the poor state of women entrepreneurship in India:

- According to Index of Women Entrepreneurs India is ranked 52nd out of the 57 surveyed countries
- According to a World Bank Enterprise Survey, the percentage of women in leadership positions in 2014 was as low as nine percent
- 98 percent of businesses owned by women are micro-enterprises, where approximately 90 percent of them operate in the informal sector. (Purva Khera, *IMF Working Paper No. 18/212*, 2018.)
- Data from the Sixth Economic Census, which was conducted between January 2013 and April 2014. Out of 58.5 million businesses counted by that census, 8.05 million were owned by a woman, which corresponds to a rate of 13.76 percent of women among the total number of entrepreneurs in India.

The General Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) Report states women take up entrepreneurship due to, necessity and opportunity. Worldwide, women are much more likely to be driven by necessity than men when starting a business (GEM, 2012).

While many Indian women have ambitions towards entrepreneurship, it is often more difficult for them to succeed. Apart from this it is evident that entrepreneurship is an innovation driven process; and three stages recognized under innovative entrepreneurship is:

1. Idea Generation,
2. Transformation of idea into reality,
3. Actualize through integration of resources and management.

Through various studies it can be justified that mostly the women in business are handicapped at the stage two and three i.e. they find a lack of support and guidance at the transformation and actualization level and resource management. In fact, India has been found to be in a group of countries where women business owners (as well as women leaders and professionals) struggle with less favorable conditions, pronounced cultural biases, and a lack of business resources such as finances, capital, training, and development. (Mastercard, "Mastercard Index of Women Entrepreneurs", 2018) (Sabrina Korreck, 2019) Most importantly, the women who have broken the glass ceiling share that it was mostly due to a desire to carve a niche, strong education and support of their families.

## 2.2 Work Family conflict and Women Entrepreneurship

The dominant construct in the work-family literature is the work-family conflict (Allen et al., 2000; Byron, 2005), 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, str. 77). Work – Family Conflict can be understood as an interference of the work role with personal or family responsibilities. Research shows that work, rather than family characteristics, have the strongest correlation with work family conflict (Frone et. al., 1992) making it imperative to understand its construct and its impact on the growth of the professionals.

When talking about entrepreneurial venture it is clear that the success of a venture is directly related to the efficiency of the business idea and the hard work, passion and dedication of the entrepreneur. The studies say that higher levels of conflict lead to a lower organizational commitment (Netemeyer et al., 1996; Allen et al., 2000; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998) which can never work in the favor of an entrepreneur irrespective of his gender.

Negative spillover from work to family causes changes in attitudes that are non-work related. Particularly an individual, who frequently experiences problems in juggling multiple roles, tends to change attitudes about his/her family and life in general. The higher the work-family conflict, the lower the satisfaction with life (Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998; Wayne et al., 2004; Netemeyer et al., 1996; Rupert et al., 2012).

A study of 432 employees found that women with a strong work-family conflict exhibit absenteeism, whereas they did not find this relationship among men. As it turned out, the relationship between perceived conflict and leaving early was stronger for employees with family responsibilities (Boyar & Maertz, 2005). This kind of withdrawal would very strongly affect the health and progression of the business venture. Further, this might eventually result into women quitting a promising growth opportunity.

In terms of practical implications of the review, it is crucial to note that interest groups (individuals, managers, and policy-makers) should not view the work-family conflict as an individual responsibility, but rather as a problem that needs to be addressed at all levels of society. It is of great importance to understand which variables cause work-family conflict and what are its most frequent and detrimental consequences so that individual, organizational, and public initiatives can strive to reduce the conflict. (Katarina Katja Mihelič and Metka Tekavčič, 2014).

## 2.3 Factors Serving as Progress Barrier - Work Family Conflict

Women entrepreneurs as working women, wives, mothers and play many other family roles whilst playing the role of a provider and manager for their business. These role triggers conflicts, where an increased commitment to one can reduce physical, mental and emotional availability for another.

WFC has a unique nature of being a bi-directional conflict i.e. that we can understand these conflicts coming from either ends of the spectrum and affecting the other end. It can be either work disturbing the family roles or family disturbing the work responsibilities. Being unable to perform at a satisfactory level in either domain creates the WFC. Taking from the earlier models like Greenhaus and Beutell Model, 1985 identified three forms of work-family conflict. Namely, time- based conflict; strain-based conflict; and behavior-based conflict. Further through studies, we can point out that the foremost contributors of the WFC that majorly include:

- **Work Characteristics:** 1) Size of Business 2) No. of work hours: longer work hours can result into negative spill over the family roles. 3) Work Schedule Inflexibility:

flexibility can give one a freedom to meet work and non-work pursuits resulting into reduction of 4) Work Stressors: such as anxiety, unpleasant mood, tension and irritability which undeniably affect both work and non-work behavior 5) Work place support.

- **Family Characteristics:** 1) No. of children or size of the family: more members would require more care taking at home and family roles 2) Age of the children: the younger the children the more attention they demand this conflict might subside as the children grow older 3) Family support: attitudinal, emotional and instrumental.
- **Personal Characteristics:** 1) Gender. 2) Marital Status. 3) Emotional Intelligence: the ability of self – surveillance and influencing other's feelings in order to enhance self – awareness and motivation. 4) Locus of control. 5) Self efficacy: individual's belief in self.

Taking again from various studies these conflicts may further result into: 1. Job – Spouse conflict 2. Job – Parent conflict 3. Job – Homemaker Conflict; inducing work family misbalance, Job dissatisfaction, Marital dissatisfaction, Relationship dissatisfaction and Life dissatisfaction, giving rise to decreased morale and mental physical and emotional exhaustion resulting into burnout or withdrawal behavior.

### 3 PROPOSED SUGGESTIONS TO DEAL WITH WORK FAMILY CONFLICT

To bring about a change or to remove the barrier of WFC and foster women entrepreneurial growth following need to be taken into account:

- Greenhaus & Beutell (1985) found that a pro-feminist sex role attitude from spouses can reduce work family conflict for working women. Instrumental support from spouse and family can bring about a drastic change in the work pattern and emotional well-being of a women entrepreneur further reducing time pressure and role demands causing the conflict. This can also negate the possibility of Family-work conflict.
- Kim & Ling (2001) further maintain that in addition to the support of the partner, other family members and/or domestic helps can reduce the work family conflict. There are initiatives taken by various authorities to help the women in business to counter the challenges that come with juggling multiple roles.
- It can be further implied as a conclusion of various studies that education, self-efficacy and emotional intelligence of a women entrepreneur can also reduce the WFC.
- Not only women education by education to society is also crucial to remove the stigma of “gender roles” reducing the burden these conflicts put on a minority gender.
- India Council of Women Entrepreneurs, New Delhi •Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) •Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Karnataka (AWEK) •World Association of Women Entrepreneurs (WAWA) etc, there are many flagship organization that are established to help women cope with the challenges of operating a venture. Promotion and support to such agencies can help them reach out to more potential candidates and further they can guide these budding entrepreneurs with the help of studies like this.
- Additionally, vocational training to be extended to women community that enables them to understand the essential of better management making it easier for them and their ventures to succeed.

### 4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

As per the Indian NITI Ayog's Spokesperson - Aug. 2019 report, women workforce participation would add close to USD 700 billion to India's economy (source: news article, Economic Times, Aug 09, 2019). Helping women entrepreneurs by supporting their venture and encouraging women to participate in entrepreneurial ventures will not only help raise the gender equality in the domain but also provide the society and the economy of the county a significant upsurge.

Also considering the present crisis of the economy and evident from the data and statistics stated above in this study encouraged participation from women will further give the needed boost to the aspiration of Atma-Nirbhar Bharat helping the government stabilize the GDP at the earliest and neutralizing the economic crisis.

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