

DETERMINANTS OF WORK LIFE BALANCE OF WORKING MOTHERS

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ABSTRACT

Despite the growing prominence in the work force, working mothers are still found to be juggling hard between work and family responsibilities with their increasing share of dilemmas and disparities. The paper studies the determinants of work life balance of working mothers and the potential sources of stress specific to working mothers and their consequences. The study addresses the main research objective which was to find out solutions to ease the dilemma that a working mother encounters while dividing her energy and capabilities between parenting, work, relationships and self. The survey was conducted in the city of Allahabad and 100 working mothers were surveyed on a structured questionnaire. SPSS software was used to analyze the data with the help of statistical tools like frequency, cross tabulation, chi square and Z test. The major findings of the survey highlighted that working mothers are mostly stressed with their primary responsibility of motherhood to the extent of forgetting one's own well being and physical health. The study recommends significant ways to balance work and family and achieve the most desired contentment of a working mother. The study reassures working mothers by reinventing, evolving and transitioning positively through the trials of working motherhood with knowledge, practice, strength and fulfillment. The modern work environment needs to reconsider the special needs of this working population, changing its orientation from male dominance to gender neutrality and parenting friendly behavior. Last but not the least, the family as a whole, needs to adjust accordingly, to the needs of the working mother so as to allow a healthier family to develop and grow consistently.

Keywords: Working Mother, Working Mothers Dilemma, Work Life Balance

INTRODUCTION

The vast majority of men grow up learning that their job in life is to be a provider. They know as they seek out their trade or career that their job is to support their families. Even when a dual income is needed, how often do men feel guilty about going to work? It can be attributed to two distinct reasons. The first is that our society is set up to understand that men work and second is men are not wired to feel guilty about going to work. It seems to be more of a biological instinct for them to go out and provide. Women, however, feel a biological instinct to

mother their children. So, what do we do when we either have to go to work or want to go to work and still feel guilt? How do we find a balance? (Lynn, 2013). The dilemmas working mothers face as they attempt to perform the dual roles of mothering and working is being increasingly noticed by parents and professional both. Many of the difficulties of working and mothering revolve around managing the conflicts that emerge in terms of child care issues, maternal-child relationships, social expectations, work life balance and family-work stress (Zambrana, Hurst & Hite, 1979). A study revealed

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that women whose moms worked outside the home are more likely to have jobs themselves, are more likely to hold supervisory responsibility at those jobs, and earn higher wages than women whose mothers stayed home full time. Men raised by working mothers are more likely to contribute to household chores and spend more time caring for family members (Kathleen, 2015). The major stresses of being a working mother remain lack of time, and a feeling of guilt, due to perceived neglect of the parenting role (Jayita&Murali, 2009). However, the stress which moves between care giving and wage earning navigates through a set of tangled social, cultural and political threads of situations dealing with childcare, womanhood, working life, societal roles and other relationships (Lisa, 2015). The rewards are many, including personal benefits, financial rewards, and improved family life. To enable this, considerable adjustments are necessary at the individual level and at the workplace, which help the mother to fulfill the dual responsibilities of career and motherhood (Jayita&Murali, 2009).

DEFINITION OF WORKING MOTHERS

Working mothers refers to women who are mothers and who work outside the home for income in addition to the work they perform at home in raising their children. Working mother may be defined as a woman with the ability to combine a career with the added responsibility of raising a child. Within this definition two different categories of working women may be encompassed: the stay at home mother who works from home and the woman who works away from home while managing to fulfill her maternal duties (Jayita&Murali, 2009).

STRESS DEFINED

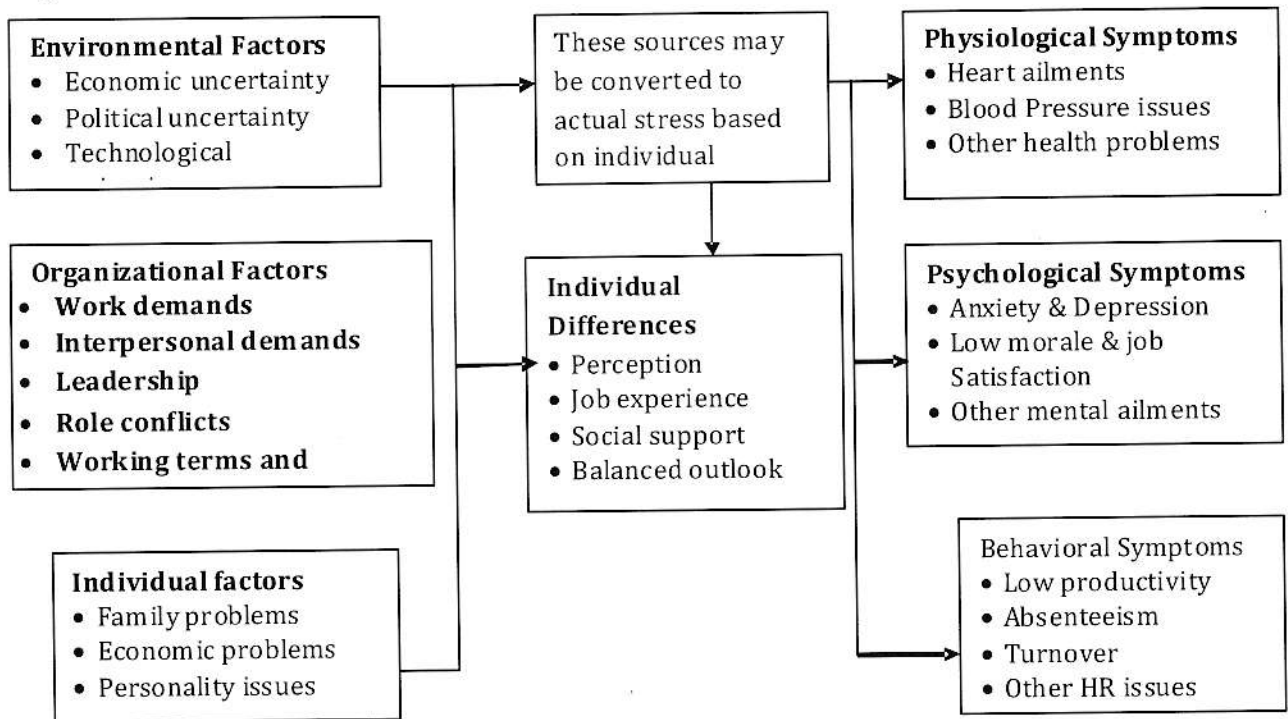
Hans Selye defined stress in 1936. He defined it as the "non-specific response of the body to any demand for change." Stress is body's way of responding to any kind of demand. It can be caused by both good and bad experiences. When people feel stressed by something going on around them, their bodies react by releasing chemicals into the blood. These chemicals give

people more energy and strength, which can be a good thing if their stress is caused by physical danger. But this can also be a bad thing, if their stress is in response to something emotional and there is no outlet for this extra energy and strength (Elaine, 2016). Stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint or demand related to what he or she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. While stress is discussed in a negative context, it also has a positive value. It is an opportunity when it offers potential gain. For example, the superior performance of an athlete or a stage performer. Such individuals often use stress positively to rise to the occasion and perform to their maximum. Typically, stress is associated with constraints and demands. The former prevents from doing what is desired and the latter refers to the loss of something desired. Two conditions are necessary for potential stress to become actual stress. There must be uncertainty over the outcome and the outcome must be important. Stress is highest for those individuals who perceive that they are uncertain as to whether they will win or lose and is lowest for those who think that winning or losing is a certainty. Importance is also critical because if winning or losing is unimportant outcome, then there is no stress. If sustaining a job or earning a promotion doesn't hold any importance, then there is no reason to stress over undergoing a performance review (Robbins, 2000).

STRESS SPECIFIC TO WORKING MOTHERS

The Primary Dilemma, an organization that recognizes stress in working mothers is not the same for all. Based on its research activities, it provides suggestions that clarify the dilemma of work-family choices and non-choices that all women face. The organization offers guidance and resources to help women in becoming more content in working-mother life. It helps refining plans, engaging partners and treating other working mothers (bosses, peers or employees) with respect and understanding. Working mothers are treated as an undifferentiated group. There

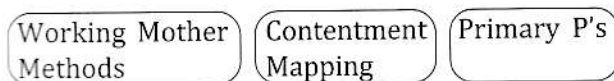
Fig. 1: Model of Stress



Source: Robbins, organizational behavior, ninth edition, 2000, pg-565

are unique factors that contribute to each of individual successes and setbacks. But still working mothers fall victim to the mind-set and to all the criticisms and comparisons. No attention is given to their unique motivations, pressures and support networks. The Primary Dilemma based on the experiences of more than hundred real working mothers who have shared their stories and strategies, has evolved three basic pillars of working mothers lifestyle:

Fig 2: Pillars of Working Mothers Lifestyle



Source: www.primarydilemma.com, accessed on 20th May 2016

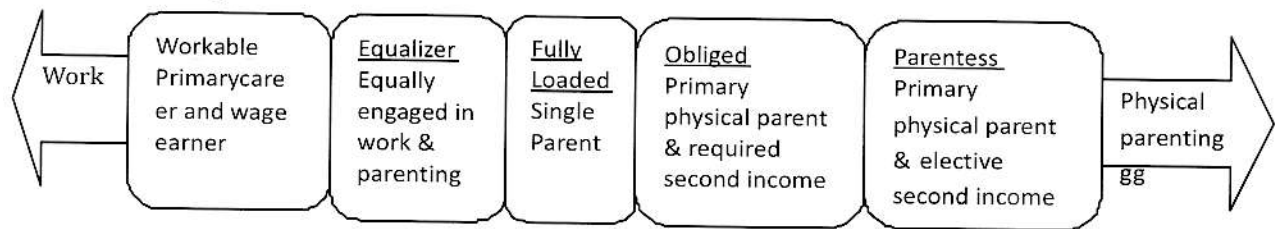
1. Working Mother Methods

Any person has only a finite capacity of physical time and energy. A working mother must divide her energy between work and parenting so as not to overwhelm her capacity and get stressed. Each working mother has her own

formula. But there are some qualities and choices that are shared by groups of women. These are called shared approaches Working-Mother Methods. The Primary Dilemma identifies five Working-Mother Methods:

- a. **Workable:** workable working mothers are typically the primary wage earners. They have to spend more time and energy at work than physical childcare. They are primarily working enabled by someone else providing childcare and helping in other responsibilities.
- b. **Equalizer:** working mothers in this category have relatively equal earning power to their partners. They share the responsibilities equally with their partners in the management of work commitments, household, and childcare.
- c. **Fully Loaded:** in this category, the working mothers are mostly single parent who is solely responsible for work and family commitments.
- d. **Obligated:** these working mothers have a

Fig. 3 : Working Mother Methods



Source: www.primarydilemma.com, accessed on 20th May 2016

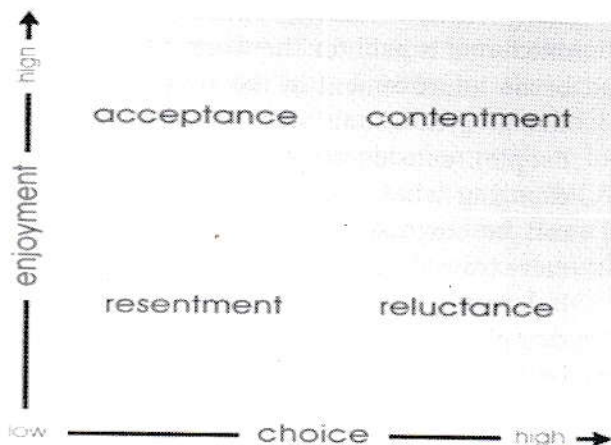
majority of childcare responsibilities and supply a required second income for their family.

- e. **Parentess**: these working mothers have a majority of childcare responsibilities and produce adiscretionary second income for their family.

2. Contentment Mapping

Working motherhood is stressful but those women who report a fulfilling balance between work and family commitments feel empowered by their choices and find enjoyment in their Working-Mother Method. Contentment Mapping may be helpful in avoiding the potential sources of stress in working mothers. Contentment map is depicted as under:

Fig 4: Contentment Mapping



Source: www.primarydilemma.com, accessed on 20th May 2016

The contentment level of the working mothers can be assessed by the following considerations:

- a. The working mothers consent and

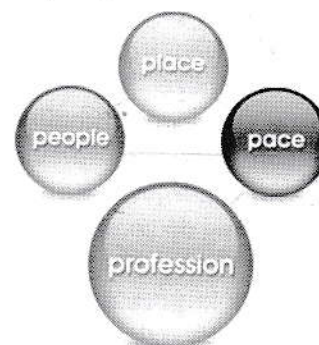
willingness to work or is the situation is forced on to her or is it partially voluntary or partially forced.

- b. If the consent and willingness of the working mother is not present, then she can evaluate other alternatives that can improve the situations.
- c. The working mother's capacity, time, and capabilities are uncomfortably stretched in performing her responsibilities.
- d. If her capacity is too much stretched, she can prioritize the commitments that can be delegated, lessened or evaded which can make her feel more balanced.
- e. The level of enjoyment a working mother derives from her job, parenting, social commitments, relationships and own well being.

3. Primary P's

The Primary P's in a working mothers life style is a system to help identify basic things that can be adjusted to make job more manageable, satiating and stress free:

Fig 5: Primary P's



Source: www.primarydilemma.com, accessed on 20th May 2016

- a. Place of work :** The first and the foremost primary of a working mother is the place of work. The distance from home to the place of work is an important stressor or contributing factor towards work life balance. The duration of commute, whether it is public or a private, time of the commute etc impact the quality of life. A short commute is an incredible daily time savings. Compare a 20 minute commute versus a 40 minute commute. The time savings is 40 minutes a day and over 3 hours a week. A shorter commute gives a more flexible access to the activities of children. A short commute is not always achievable, but it can make an enormous difference in quality of life. Besides, if the job requires travel, it can be an added stress and challenge for a working mother. Travel can be one of the most disruptive work requirements for any working mother, especially if she is the primary physical parent. It requires finding childcare support and managing the emotional concern of children. A job with limited travel or planned travel can potentially make life easier of the working mother. It is important to consider especially in dual career households, if the place of work is far and constant then the house could be relocated for convenience and time saving.
- b. Pace of job:** is the second primary p of the working mother which should be given serious consideration while deciding on the job. The number of work hours should be negotiated wisely, if possible. Many jobs require much more than a 35 or 40 hour work week which would challenge the work life balance. One can remain involved in fulfilling work in a job with fewer hours. It may mean giving up some responsibilities or changing companies. Also the stress level of the job is an important influence on the working mothers balancing act. A job that requires being active 24/7 can make parenting very challenging. Besides, flexibility of the job can be a very important
- to the working mother. Whether it is schedule flexibility/ flexi time shifts, telecommuting, work from home etc. can assist in her role of a working mother.
- c. People associated:** the third primary p which a working mother should consider is the kind of people she is working with and for whom she is working. If she doesn't like the team she is associated with, it can make work a miserable experience. Seeking out work situations with positive dynamic people can be bliss to womanhood. Also, managing others is a job in itself and can limit personal flexibility. A working mother should think about her personal capacity and choose carefully the people that will support her other roles. Last but not the least; it can be tricky and difficult to find an employer who supports personal and professional needs of a working mother. But this can be assessed with the passing time and can be expressed assertively to make working more comfortable and balanced.
- d. Profession:** is the fourth primary p which extremely affects the working lifestyle of a working mother. It is important to find enjoyment in work. Enjoyment can take many forms, including gratification from how much one is paid for the work. If there can be no improvement in the contentment by changing how one works (Place, Pace or People), consideration should be given for changing what one works (Profession). It can be surprising to see the outcome by mere transferability of skills to another field. It depends solely on the individual's priority that place, pace, people or profession has to be kept in which order as this preference order is compatible to individual circumstances.

DETERMINANTS OF WORK LIFE BALANCE OF A WORKING MOTHER

According to American Pediatric Association, there are many sources and factors of stress where a working mother has to capitalize and invest her resources financially or

emotionally. Some important determinants of work life balance of a working mother are as follows:

1. Childcare : Childcare is one of the biggest challenges for any working mother. It is emotional, logistical and often confusing. When childcare is done at home it has to be reliable for any working mother and nurturing for the child. When childcare cannot be done at home, day-care comes in many shapes and sizes. Types of day-care may be as follows:

- a. **Large Network:** These centres are part of a large network of day- employers for day-care at work. They are usually associated with large companies and are found in big cities.
- b. **Local, Independent:** Typically small in scale, this type of centre has only one or few branches or centres. It is part of a residential community and caters to local needs.
- c. **Family day care:** Family day-care offers childcare in the home of the childcare provider. Regulation of family day-care varies from state to state, but typically a centre with several children is subject to state licensing requirements.
- d. **After school care:** Most schools now have "aftercare" programs. The child can stay back after the school hours for an extended period to be looked after by the school. Such programs are hosted by the school or administered in cooperation with a local organization such as a church or the YMCA. In addition to the school tuition fees, there is a fee for afterschool care that is comparable to hourly babysitting rates per child.

Regulation of Day-care: It is important to know about licensing and accreditation while selecting a day-care option for a child:

- **Licensing:** Driven at a state level, licensing helps to protect the safety of children in an out-of-home care environment. The day care centres which are government owned or privately owned but are licensed holds a considerable amount of security and accountability.
- **Accreditation:** Accredited facilities go

beyond state licensing to meet national standards. The teachers and care providers in an accredited centre are expected to pursue continued education and training in early childhood development, which would be an added advantage for the child's development and reduces the concern and guilt of a working mother to a far extent.

2. Work : Another challenge that lies under the scope of a working mother is her work or profession. Work success must be defined in a way that supports the individual's capacity and contentment. For some working mothers, that may mean seeking roles with increasing responsibility and salary. For other working mothers, it may mean sustaining a job that offers work-family balance. There are other pressures at the professional front that needs to be dealt with a lot of wisdom and time management to strike the right balance between work and family. These can include managing maternity, managing breastfeeding, negotiating earnings, managing travel schedule, inflexible leave policies etc. Business today is very different from the business fifty years ago. Advances in technology plus the evolving work and family roles of women in this country have contributed to the business environment of the 21st century. Research confirms that employment has a positive effect on women and families. Despite this conclusion, women still encounter a number of difficulties and misperceptions that affect their performance in the workplace:

- One such difficulty is that men and women have **different leadership styles**. Leadership styles attributed to women are believed to reduce their effectiveness in the workplace. Specifically, women are thought to be more people-oriented in their leadership style and men more task-oriented. The people-oriented leadership style of women is viewed as less likely to inspire productivity among workers.
- **Gender stereotyping** is a problem that working women must deal with. The behaviour of men and women in the workplace is similar. Differences may have

existed in the past but these differences are rapidly disappearing. Perhaps what needs to be examined is why these differences are disappearing.

- Another problem faced by women is stress caused by **roleconflict or multiple roles**. Research has suggested that the use and choice of coping strategies may be a factor in reducing such stress (Billings & Moos, 1981; Folman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, & Gruen, 1986; Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). A coping resource that has been found to reduce stress is social support (Eckenrode, 1991; Eckenrode & Gore, 1990; Emmons et al., 1990; Greenhaus, 1988; Riefman, Biernat & Lang, 1991). The particular social support mechanisms most helpful to working women are emotional support and tangible support. Tangible support is defined as providing some sort of assistance for another person.
- There is a **work/family conflict** that particularly affects working women. It is extended work hours. (Piotrkowski et al 1987). Research suggests that a child's well-being suffers as a result of lack of time with parents (Piotrkowski et al 1987). Specifically, "the lack of sensitive, responsive, and consistent care from overworked parents or substitute providers can lead to decreased cognitive and social skills (Percel & Menaghan 1994). And this can promote attachment insecurity in children (Belsky, 1990) (Glass & Estes, 1997:295)."
- Research has determined that working women with **rigid schedules** report more family difficulties than working women with flexible schedules (Ralston, 1990). It has been determined that there is a relationship between the lack of job flexibility and depression (Googins, 1991). It has been reported that, "when family responsibilities expand, mothers are more likely than fathers to change jobs, to work part-time, or exit the labor force for a spell because families cannot afford to lose fathers' wages. The result is often a decrease in mothers' financial and occupational attainment (Felmlee, 1995,

Corcoran et al 1984) (Glass & Estes 1997 : 297)."

- **Men and women communicate differently** and; therefore, negotiate-differently (Miller, 2003). The successful female professional must not only understand the gender differences in communication but be able to use them to her advantage as well. Miller (2003) explains this with an example: when a man leaves a meeting and on being asked about it he will probably reply "Great." without conveying any information about what happened at the meeting. A woman, in contrast, might answer same question with, "Okay, but I could have handled the cost issue a little better." Like the man's comment, hers does not necessarily describe what happened at the meeting. Rather, it reflects her "desire for perfection." If you rely on what each actually says, without taking into the account the gender of the speaker, you are liable to draw erroneous conclusions. The same is true when men and women negotiate. The relational style usually associated with women focuses on the relationship between the parties. Inherent in that negotiating style is a desire not only to achieve substantive objectives but also to develop the relationship between two sides. The competitive style is associated with men focuses more on the substantive outcome of the negotiation. Some women who are more comfortable with a relational style adopt a competitive one because they believe it to be more effective in business settings.

Above workplace problems can be dealt with the help of some strategies:

- Research has shown that **rewarding work experience** can reduce the stress associated with one of the multiple roles that women occupy: parenting (Barnett & Marshall, 1991). Research demonstrates the positive influence of workplace policies toward families on employees (Bohen & Viveros-Long, 1981; Marshall & Barnett, 1994; Pleck 1992). It has also been shown that spousal

support is most effective in helping women deal with the demands of multiple roles (Cohen & Syme, 1985; Duxbury.)

- Bernas and Major, (2000), suggest that the best way to deal with work family conflict is to find an **individualized management strategy**. Kossek et al. (1999) suggested that conscientious individuals are intensely involved in both work and family roles. Intense involvement in dual roles is a strategic approach for managing work-family conflict. It is necessary for a working woman to find the management strategy for her because the family needs of all women are neither homogenous nor static. For example, childbearing employees may require leave time; mothers of pre-schoolers may need childcare and a reduced work schedule in order to support the emotional needs of their children. Women with older children may need after-school assistance and, perhaps, a more flexible work schedule. Women who are care-givers for older adults may need leave for emergencies. These different family and work factors mean that the policies that are optimal for one class of employees at one point in time may have little or no effect on reducing work/family conflict for another class, or even for the same employees at another point in time (Glass & Estes, 1997: 293).
- The research literature supports the **use of flex-time policies as a means of reducing stress** and improving employee morale. Decreased work hours serve business by increasing employee productivity and decreasing turnover, and they serve families by decreasing depression in employees. Flex time policies increase employee productivity by decreasing absenteeism and turnover, and they positively influence family functioning by decreasing employee depression and work/family conflict while increasing the time families spend together (Glass & Estes, 1997: 306).
- Research confirms that **family friendly policies** greatly improve the working lives

of most women. Policies that support emergency leave to care for elderly adults should not be overlooked because the Bureau of Labour Statistics reports that the number of women 55 and older in the labour force will increase by 52 per cent between 2000 and 2010. These women represent the major care givers.

- Being more **courageous in the workplace** helps women succeed. Workplace courage is defined as taking a stand or a risk. Courageous women take responsibility for their lives. They design their lives rather than letting outside influences dictate who they are or what they should be (Walston, 2002: 28). Courageous women are 100 percent responsible for how they design their lives. This includes taking credit for accomplishments when merited. She responds to the promotion or pay raise by stating the qualities and strengths and describing how use those strengths to better the company or the project at hand.
- **Encouraging employers** to support efforts that would benefit men as well as women in dealing workplace problems. Research evidence supports the fact that employers with family-friendly policies have more reliable employees (Alverson, 1999). Organizations have developed child care programs, like Toyota Motor Manufacturing in Georgetown. The company recently opened an on-site 24-hour day care licensed for 230 children.

3. Family and Relationships: The third most important determinant of work life balance of a working mother is her family and relationships. Relationships can be strengthened with the help of most important skill that is communication. Some of the effective communication techniques adapted from guidelines published by West Virginia University are as follows:

- **Frequent Practice** - practice communication regularly and it becomes a good habit to eliminate misunderstandings and to convey one's own stand and mental state.

- **Finding Appropriateness** - Finding a mutually convenient time helps to make the quality of communication better.
- **Being Attentive** - concentrating on what is being said and being a patient and an impartial listener reaps long term benefits.
- **Reflecting back** - restating what has been said helps the speaker know that you understand his perception. Therefore, giving follow-ups is very important in communication as the correctness of the message is cross checked.
- **Summarize** - summing the important messages so that the speaker recognizes what was important during the conversation.
- **Positive Nonverbal Message** - while communicating, let the body show the interest by positive postures, equal positioning, composed facial expressions and positive gestures. This will help to put ideas across with conviction and optimism.
- **Expressing Thoughts and Feelings** - openly and honestly expressing internal thoughts and feelings helps collaboration between partners and begins with the understanding that you trust each other with all information.
- **Communicate Without Being Adversarial** - communication should be done non-judgmentally by talking about questions or concerns without blaming other people. Being assertive while communicating is positive but aggressiveness should be avoided as it creates negativity.

4. Well-Being: In the gruelling task of working motherhood, women often put themselves last. The following basics help to handle the responsibilities of a working mother with strength and vigour:

- **Health:** Only a healthy woman can handle all the demands of working motherhood. Being sensitive to one's own personal capacity helps. Anyone will suffer if not rested. A regular physical and gynaecologic examination is advisable. Above 40 years of age, mammogram test is recommended. Emotional health has to be looked into.

Finding an outlet that brings joy -friends, a hobby, exercise. Committing to this as an outlet for sanity and finding mental calm, since the entire surrounding will benefit because of this simple act. Staying true to core values, looking at the non-essentials and reordering priorities helps to improve the mental health.

Ø**Social outlet:** Everyone needs a social outlet. Making time for friends, family, husband, peer group and enjoying the social side of personality helps to realize that life is not only work and parenting; it can be enjoyed beyond that.

Ø**Financial security:** Planning according to the budget helps to avoid taking on debt whenever possible. Being involved in securing future and the future of your family shows the prudence of a working mother.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- a. Addressing the dilemma that a working mother carries while dividing her energy between work, parenting, relationships and self.
- b. Ascertaining ways for the contentment level of the working mother in performing all her responsibilities.
- c. Devising methods for primary responsibility and the main source of stress for a working mother that is childcare.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A thorough literature review of the determinants of work life balance of a working mother was done and a structured questionnaire was designed based on those determinants. The first section of the questionnaire was based on demographics details of the working mothers of Allahabad city. Five point Likert scale was used to collect the response of working mothers. The second section was divided into three segments that covered constructs on children related, work related and family related stress of a working mother respectively. The third section tries to find out the expectations and improvements which a working mother suggests. The last section

covers constructs on the well being, mental and physical health, recreation and spiritual goals of a working mother. Convenience sampling technique was used in the study. The survey was then conducted in the city of Allahabad and primary data collection was done from 100 respondents who were working mothers presently working in Allahabad city but not necessarily the residents of the place. Data analysis was done using SPSS 16.0 software. Various statistical tools like frequency analysis, cross tabulation, factor analysis and regression were used to derive major findings of the study. The findings were analyzed for extracting recommendations for the working mothers to help them balance their responsibilities along with attaining the much required mental peace and contentment.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Demographic Details:

Table 1: Parental Status

Single Mother	Dual Parenting	Joint Family Support
11%	63%	26%

Interpretation: Most of the respondents i.e 63 respondents out of 100 working mothers were dual parenting their children.

Table 2: Age group of the Mother

18-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45 & Above
7%	45%	27%	21%

Interpretation: 45% of the respondents are young mothers belonging to the age group of 25-34 years.

Table 3: No. of Children

One	Two	Three	Four or More
38%	49%	9%	4%

Interpretation: Majority of the respondents' i.e 49% of working mothers have two children to support and look after.

Table 4 : Age Group of Children

0-5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	Above 15 years
40%	15%	24%	21%

Interpretation: 40% of the mothers have children in the age-group of 0-5 years, implies that majority of young working mothers with very young children face the childcare problem.

Table 5 : Family Monthly Income (Per Month)

<Rs.10,000	Rs.10,001- Rs.25,000	Rs.25,001- Rs.50,000	>Rs.50,001
15%	11%	37%	37%

Interpretation: Maximum mothers who were surveyed were having a Monthly Family Income greater than Rs.25,001.

Table 6: Educational Background

10th	12th	Graduation	Post-graduation
10%	9%	45%	36%

Interpretation: Most of the working mothers' i.e 45% were Graduates.

Table 7: Occupation

Govt./Public Sector	Self-Employed Employee	Private Sector Employee	Work From Home
45%	28%	15%	12%

Interpretation: The maximum number of working mothers' i.e 45% were Govt. /Public Sector employees.

Reliability of Variables used in the Study

Table 8 : Cronbach's Alpha for Variables

Variables	Cronbach's alpha
Children Related Stress	0.885
Work Related Stress	0.962
Family Related Stress	0.943
Expectations	0.851
Well-being	0.598

Interpretation : All the variables have been found highly reliable except well being of a working mother with 0.598.

Cross Tabulation

Table 9: Parental Status * Where do you leave your child while you are at Work?

Crosstab					
Count		Where do you leave your child while you are at Work?			
		At home with Caretaker	At home with Grandparents	Others	Total
Parental Status	Single Mother	0	11	0	11
	Dual Parenting	52	11	0	63
	Joint Family Support	0	16	10	26
	Total	52	38	10	100

Interpretation : From the above table, it can be interpreted that only 52% of working mother with dual parenting left their children at home with the caretaker, but none of the single working mothers left their kids at home due to security reasons.

Table 10 : Parental Status * I have to do a lot of household work after office or work hours.

Crosstab						
Count		I have to do a lot of household work after office/work hours.				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Total
Parental Status	Single Mother	0	11	0	0	11
	Dual Parenting	13	22	28	0	63
	Joint Family Support	2	1	13	10	26
	Total	29	39	22	10	100

Interpretation: This implies that women who are single parents have to do a lot of household work after their office hours as compared to women who have a joint family support or are dual parenting their children.

Table 11 : Parental Status * I have to work overtime to meet my financial commitments.

Crosstab							
Count		I have to work overtime to meet my financial commitments.					
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Parental Status	Single Mother	11	0	0	0	0	11
	Dual Parenting	13	28	11	11	0	63
	Joint Family Support	1	1	5	9	10	26
	Total	29	28	11	22	10	100

Interpretation : This above table implies that the single mothers have to work overtime to meet their financial commitments as compared to the ones who have a dual parenting and a joint family support system.

Table 12: Parental Status * Work-Family Conflict

Crosstab							
Count		Work-Family conflict					
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Parental	Single Mother	11	0	0	0	0	11
Status	Dual Parenting	0	28	24	11	0	63
	Joint Family Support	0	16	0	0	10	26
Total	11	44	24	11	10	100	

Interpretation: This table implies that all working women, single mothers or the women who have a joint family support or who are dual parenting their children, all experience work family conflict and find it difficult to establish a balance between the both.

Table 13 : Parental Status * I am not able to spend quality time with my family.

CrossTab							
Count		I am not able to spend quality time with my family.					
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Parental	Single Mother	0	11	0	0	0	11
Status	Dual Parenting	37	0	11	15	0	63
	Joint Family Support	0	16	0	0	10	26
Total		37	27	11	15	10	100

Interpretation: The above table implies that all Working Mothers strongly agree that they are not able to spend quality time with their families irrespective of the fact that they are single mothers or have family support.

Table 14 : Parental Status * I prefer more of flexi-time policies/flexible working shifts.

CrossTab					
Count		I prefer more of flexi-time policies/flexible working shifts.			
		Very Important	Neutral	Least Important	Total
Parental	Single Mother	11	0	0	11
Status	Dual Parenting	27	35	0	62
	Joint Family Support	0	16	10	26
Total		38	51	10	99

Interpretation: It can be implied that all the working mothers prefer more of flexi-time policies/flexible working shifts and consider them to be very important for work life balance.

Table 15: Occupation * my children cannot accompany me to my office.

Crosstab							
Count		My children cannot accompany me to my office.					
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Occupation	Government/Public Sector Employee	15	8	13	0	9	45
	Self Employed	0	0	02	10	16	28
	Private Sector Employee	0	0	0	15	0	15
	Work from Home	2	7	0	0	3	12
Total		27	24	13	15	21	100

Interpretation: The above table implies that only those children can accompany their mothers who are self employed, private sector employees, or are working from home.

Table 16: Occupation * I have heavy workload.

Crosstab						
Count		I have heavy workload.				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Total
Occupation	Government/Public Sector Employee	15	13	8	9	45
	Self Employed	0	19	9	0	28
	Private Sector Employee	15	0	0	0	15
	Work from Home	1	5	5	1	12
Total		31	37	22	10	100

Interpretation: The above table shows that private sector working mothers are mostly overburdened with their work, followed by the government sector and self employed working mothers.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Based on the analysis of data and interpretation, the major findings of the study may be summed as follows:

1. The primary responsibility of the working mother still resides with childcare and single working mothers are in most miserable state in terms of financial responsibilities, childcare support, workload and the security of their children while they are work.
2. Balancing work, family, social commitments, personal well being remains very challenging for all working mothers whether they are single, or have dual parenting support or a

- joint family support system.
3. Spending quality time with children to the contentment of working mothers is yet to be achieved.
 4. Work, instead of giving the support and solid foundation is more of an impediment for working mothers due to lack of flextime policies, unavailability of childcare facilities at work, work overload, long working hours and unreasonable remuneration.
 5. Personal well being of working mothers in terms of holidays, leaves, spiritual needs, and recreation activities take a backseat while work, childcare, family and social commitments are at the fore of all the working mothers life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The first and the foremost expectation and requirement that needs to be fulfilled of any working mother is the availability of safe, hygienic and secure childcare centers in the vicinity of the workplace. This will not only provide mental peace to the working mothers but will also enhance her efficiency and organizational output and will help to achieve the most desired work family balance.
2. Working mothers are in urgent expectation for flextime policies where they can prioritize their responsibilities within the specified working hours and can improve their work and family output.
3. Organizational support in terms of fair remuneration, highly active women grievance cell, less workload, counseling and cognitive therapies, respectable treatment from seniors, peers and subordinates are highly recommended for today's working mothers.
4. Organizations should take extra efforts for the working mothers targeting the self-

fulfilling prophecy, which says that when an employee's personal goals are fulfilled he/she readily contributes to the organizational goals.

5. Last but not the least, the support system of the working mothers including paid help, families and partners should understand, support and respect her decision to be independent and secure for the future and that this independence, confidence and security would only contribute positively to the family, children and society to which the working mothers belong.

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