CHAPTER-2
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
& LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Women play active role in the economic development of their country. Earlier their role is only limited to house hold activities. The present educational and infrastructural facilities have encouraged women to occupy prominent positions in the corporate world. The current global competitive conditions have made the corporate companies to formulate various welfare policies suitable for women in order to grab the untapped potential of the women work force. Many women are opting jobs in order to build a good career and give financial support to their families. To lead a comfortable living and self satisfaction, women are working hard to get a balance between their personal and work life. The support from their spouse, parents, children, supervisors, friends and peer group will them in gaining the balance between paid and unpaid responsibilities. The Work Life balance (WLB) practices raise their job satisfaction and job performance and to enjoy family life.

2.2 Working Mothers Empowers Children

Working mothers have been proved to be beneficial for a child's cognitive development after the first year of a child's life (Sailor, 2012). A study showed when mothers worked during the earlier years of a child's life, there were negative effects on a child's thinking and behaviour due to the child not developing a proper attachment to their mother during the developmental stage of attachment (Sailor, 2012). If a mother is present during the first year of life, studies show a mothers job doesn't have negative effects on her child (Sailor, 2012). Children with employed mothers are found to have higher cognitive scores (Sailor, 2012) and receive higher test score than children with nonworking mothers on language, reading and math (Hoffman, 1998). Studies also find that boys and girls are affected differently by a mothers employment. Girls are shown to be less affected by a mothers employment. They appear to have more beneficial results through a mothers employment and to the alternate child care (Sailor, 2012). Studies also find that daughters of working mothers have an overall better achievement in academics, their career and commitment to their
work (Hoffman, 1998). Boys on the other hand did better if the mothers care was replaced by a grandmother or close relative (Sailor, 2012). A mothers employment can also dictate what type of school the child goes to. Children with both parents working may have a financial advantage. Having more than one income in the household may allow the child to go to better school than children whose parents only have one source of income (Mann, 2012) Also when a mother is working, they usually send their kids to daycare. This insinuation is beneficial to a child because it builds socialization skills (Mann, 2012) Therefore a mothers employment through research proves to be a positive

1. **Smart children:** The children of working mothers become smart and active as compared to the children of non-working mothers. This is because of the fact that the mothers being working have to move out of the house leaving all the household chores intact, the children behind understand their responsibilities and manages to do all their tasks without being dependent on others thus become smart and active enough.

2. **Independent:** The children become independent as they don’t find their mother at home all day long and thus they are left with no other option than doing their homework, breakfast, packing bags for school, preparing uniforms and all such things of their own. Doing all those little tasks that a child can do on his own makes him independent and responsible. He or she no longer depend on others for their work and become co-operative to their mothers.

3. **Inculcate good habits:** The working mothers are now a day helped by their spouse in household chores after returning from work. By seeing the fathers being a helping hand to mothers, children learn good habits and inculcate manners of helping others as well as their mothers, thus in this way good habits are inculcated in them.

4. **Mothers shower more love:** The mothers who are working ought to remain away from home and their children for long hours and could not devote quality time with them. But the other way is good as well as when mothers are back from work and spend less time with their kids, they show all their love and affection for them . So this is also one of the advantages of being a working mother.

5. **Financial help:** A working mother also adds to advantage of helping the family financially. It is beneficial as a woman becomes a helping hand to the husband in
terms of money. This way family runs in a very smooth way without any financial
difficulty and the kids also get the best as parents are able to afford due to a good
income level.

6. Kids get all facilities: The woman when works, will be able to help her spouse in
money matters. This further helps in giving their children’s world class facilities as
they are not short of money in any way. This way the kids get the best of all things.
The kids are able to join extra classes and other activities also. In this way they
become intelligent and spontaneous in their working. Those children stand different
than the children of the non working mothers.

7. An inspiration for kids: The mothers when work, become an inspiration for their
kids as they look up to their mom and say that they aspire to be like their moms in the
near future. Working moms not only work but also look after their children without
any difficulty. So such kids need to look at others for an inspiration, but they get to
see an inspiration at home only. This way, they also learn to do hard work in their life.

8. Life becomes exciting: Non-working mothers remain at home and are not more
outgoing. This way they are not able to have or expand their friend circle, but the
working mothers are able to do so and take their children out for outing whenever gets
time. This way the children also learn socializing, communicating and behaving in
front of others.

9. Good standard of living: A person can give his or her family high standard of
living as the financial problem does not arise. The kids also live the life in a healthy
and comfortable manner as all the comforts are provided by mom and dad. This is not
exactly the case with non-working woman and their kids might remain aloof of all
pleasures and comforts the children need in today’s era.

10. No dependence on husband: The working woman does not have to depend on
husband for money or any other thing. She becomes independent and earn her own
without relying on a husband. She is able to fulfil all her wants and needs without
being accountable to anyone in the family.

2.3 Studies on Working Women empower the family

Working parents often set a good work ethic for their children, helping to make them
productive members of society. For instance, in "Working Mothers are Benefiting the
Family," Reed Karaim states that working mothers set an example for their children by showing a "willingness to work" and the positive outcomes of working: namely a sense of independence, pride, and fulfillment. Karaim also believes that working mothers help to break the stereotype of women being in the home, concerned with nothing more than their physical appearance. Rather, they are successful independent women who value and use their intelligence as much as possible. I agree with Karaim and believe that working mothers set an example for their children to live life to its full potential. My mother has always encouraged me to be active in various aspects of my life. She believes that all children need to be provided with the opportunity to do anything and everything that they may want. My mother developed this sense of independence because she has been working for several years. She knows well how fulfilling a sense of accomplishment can be. She has always encouraged her daughters to work and play sports, roles that some would argue are for "boys only." By encouraging me in this way, my mother has gifted me with a strong will. I know that I am no less than any man and can be just as successful, if not more so, than my male counterpart. Children from families in which both parents work are very lucky because they receive a more dynamic view of the importance of working and the happiness it can bring to a person's life.

The Fluidity of Working Mothers. Gender Norms & Racial Bias in the Study of the Modern "Working Mothers" A working parent is a father or a mother who engages in a work life, aside from their duties as a childcare provider. There are many structures within families including, but not limited to, single, working mothers or single, working fathers. There are also married parents who are dual-earners, in which both parents provide income. Within these family structures, there is much concern about gender inequalities. Within the institution of gender, there are expected gender roles that society pins on both mothers and fathers that reflect in the home and at work. Motherhood Penalty and Fatherhood Bonus On a daily basis, parents of each gender are trying to find employment in the face of the current economic crisis. Although women are easier to employ than men are due to their salary demands, women also face the difficult challenge of defending their rights as mothers in a working environment.

The traditional feminist assumption is that gender binds women together. In fact, gender divides them” (Joan Williams Unbending Gender, p. 145) The problem with
traditional feminism is that it assumes gender roles. This ‘true womanhood’ asks for women to have piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity. It asks for women to be mothers and wives who sacrifice their need for the good of the family. Traditional feminist literature ignores what Maxine Zinn calls the ‘prism of difference’, refusing to adopt a global standpoint on how race, class, and sexual diversity are central to the study of gender. Instead traditional feminism has always focused on white middle-class needs. Traditional values fail to recognize how women’s different identities such as race, class, and sexuality shape our views and beliefs about family and motherhood. Many believe that shared social issues such as women rights bring women together, but what many do not see are the different identities such as class, race, and sexuality within gender that can cause conflicting views. The quote above by Joan Williams is a testament in understanding how these different identities within women can become a dividing factor in their beliefs. Specifically women’s beliefs and roles in the family are influenced by their individual identities. These intersections of identities play an important role in women’s beliefs on motherhood.

**Working mothers** are once again under scrutiny from the society. For a long time the belief has been that working mothers are not able to give their children the love and care that they deserve and therefore make their children have limited growth and development in both social and cognitive aspects (Raquel 1173). The view is that the relationship with the mother helps a child establish and maintain relationships with others. However, recent studies have proven that working mothers have a positive effect on their children, thus failing to prove the once widely held belief that mothers were meant to stay at home. Ever since women began entering the work force the debate has been looming over working mothers and those who choose to remain at home with their children. Such concerns are whether or not having a working mother negatively affects their children emotionally and/or academically. Another concern is the stress level a working mother faces on a daily basis. Children raised by working mothers achieve higher academic grades and adjust well socially (Lois Wladis Hoffman 438). Several studies show that children with working mothers achieve higher grade

**Working Mothers** - Many women today are facing choices that their mothers never had to face. One of these choices is whether or not to go back to work after having a child. This was practically unheard of in the 1950's. In the 1990's it is not whether the
mother will or will not go back to work, rather a question of when. When did the choice become set in stone? Why do the mothers of today have to work outside the home versus working in the home, much like their mothers did. When one thinks of the subject of working mothers, many differing opinions come to mind. What will happen to the child, will the mother have sufficient time to bond with the baby, how will household chores be divided, and so on. When thinking of working women, two models come to mind. One of which is paid employment that has a protective and beneficial mediating effect. Employment protects women against certain negative aspects of being full-time homemakers and mothers, such as monotonous housework, dependence on the male partner for financial and emotional support, increases self-esteem because they are contributing to the world they live in. These women receive a renewed interest in life because they are in the thick of it. They are living life to the fullest.

Working Mothers have Positive Effects on the Family Nowadays, more and more women work outside the home, which affects many people positively or negatively. Germaine Greer, the Australian feminist, said, “Most women still need a room of their own and the only way to find it may be outside their own homes.” If it is true, can it be done without having a negative effect on the family? One point in favour of mothers working is that their children often learn to be independent from an early age, which can only be help them in the future. Also, in many families, the man’s salary alone is not enough to cover all household expenses. Thus, the need for extra income arises, and the woman has to work. Moreover, working outside the home gives a woman a sense of her own personal identity and self-confidence. A woman who stays at home will always be known as “John’s wife” and not as a person in her own right.

2.4 Concept of Work Life Balance

The term Work Life Balance (WLB) is attracted by all including the individuals and Corporate all over the world. Though many have proposed various definitions, there is no accepted definition for this term. Work Life Balance (WLB) is defined as a satisfactory level of involvement between the multiple roles of a person’s life. It is a person’s control over the responsibilities between their workplace, family, friends and self. It is a comfortable state of equilibrium achieved between an employees
primary priorities at their work place and at their private life. There are various people like family members, friends, supervisors, peer group and others involved in every persons life. The support gained from them will play a key role in leading a comfortable life journey

Work Life Balance means the competence to schedule the hours of an individual Professional and Personal life so as to lead a healthy and peaceful life. It emphasize the values, attitudes and beliefs of women regarding their age to work in organizing and balancing their work and personal life.(K.Santhana Lakshmi & S. Sujatha Gopinath, March 2013). The following variables influencing the experience of WLB were identified while reviewing the various literatures.

- Work Family Conflict and Family Work Conflict
- Women in various roles
- Career Advancement
- Work Stress
- Child care

Work Life balance is not something that just happens. It involves the efforts of a number of partners: the employee, the organization for which the employee works, the family with whom the employee lives and the society in which all are embedded. It involves mutual understanding and respect between all of these players. (N. Gayathri & Dr. P. Karthikeyan, August 2013).

(a) Work Family Conflict and Family Work Conflict

Researchers define the incompatibility between the domain of work and the domain of family as work-family conflict. Conflict between these domains occurs when participation in one role is more difficult due to participation in the other role. Today, work-family conflict (work interfering with family) is more prevalent than family-work conflict (family interfering with work) though both can occur. However, regardless of the direction of causation, when one domain is discordant with another domain, the result is conflict and increased stress on the individual. Attribution theory states that there are internal and external explanations for work family and family-work conflict.

Krishna Reddy and Vranda (2010), discuss the issues of Family and Work Conflict and Work Family Conflict are more likely to exert negative influences in the family
domain, resulting in lower life satisfaction and greater internal conflict within the family variables impact the experience of WFC and FWC.

Compensation theory suggests that people add more to one domain than the other in order to balance what lacks in either. In other words, life balance is a direct result of the amount of time and psychological resources an individual decides to commit to both domains. If the individual commits more time or psychological resources to work, then work-family conflict may increase. If an individual decides to commit more resources to family than work, but work requirements increase, then family-work conflict also increases. While the conflict between work and family may be inevitable, researchers such as Friedman and Greenhaus (2000) suggest alternative methods for reducing the stress. For example, more autonomy in the workplace and networking with peers can increase the quality of work life. Their studies show that individuals who work for organizations that allow individuals to spend more time at home, work in virtual employment, and make flexible time arrangements, tend to perform better as a parent than those who do not have these opportunities. Maintaining satisfaction on both fronts is important for reducing the feelings of conflict (Friedman and Greenhaus, 2000).

(b) Role of Women and WLB

Women are mostly into full time services and are working 8 hours per day and 5 days in a week minimum and are confronted by increasing workload everyday. So, most of them carry work and responsibilities to home but balancing between these two complex situations in the present day fast life requires talent, tact, skill and caution. Women have to cope up with high work targets, office commitments, tight meeting schedules and the duties and responsibilities of life and home. Employers should concentrate on framing various policies and schemes to facilitate Work life balance to encourage and attract women employees. (SayantiGhosh, 2010).

Employees learn different kinds of behaviour from workplace life and private life. Since reciprocal interactions between both the life domains occur a Green Work Life Balance Concept is suggested to facilitate environmentally friendly behavior for them. (N.Gayathri, Dr.P.Karthikeyan, (2013).

Susi S & Jawaharrani.K (2011) agrees that a strong organizational culture increases
employees intent to remain in the organization. Work life balance must be supported and encouraged at all levels of the organisation including senior management, line managers and all staff. Louise Heslop (2005) have studied that the work and family outcomes such as role interference, stress strain and life satisfaction are related to several strategies and orientation.

(c) Career Advancement and WLB

Amita Singh (2010), suggested that flexi time, home working, child care facilities, option to work part time are facilities that need to be introduced and recommended for building a supportive work environment in the IT sector in India.

Mathew and Pachanatham (2009) stated that the women workforce in India was mainly employed in non-managerial, subordinate or low profile positions in the past. At present, they occupy almost all categories of positions in the workplace. These changes in work culture have added to women’s duties and responsibilities to their family as well as to society.

(d) Work stress and Work Life Imbalance

Vijaya Lakshmi et al (2013) have studied and find the issues and problems of women faculty working in educational institutions. Also found that women faculty members underwent severe stress in the process of attaining Work Life Balance. Continued work pressure resulted in poor performance. The result revealed that many female teachers have neglected their health in the process of improving the life of their family members and their students.

G.Shiva (2013) studied that “Women professionals in high position in their office have return from office in correct time, cook, clean and look after their family affairs. This makes them more stress and leads to some health problems. The leading cause of stress arises because of communication with Superior”

Mohan and Ashok (2011) explained that “Stress is often developed when an individual is assigned a major responsibility without proper authority and delegation of power, inter personal factors such as group cohesiveness, functional dependence, communication frequency, relative authority and organizational difference between role sender and forcal persons.”
Shahnaz & Jamie (2008) found that Work Stress and Work Life imbalance correlated with workaholic, regardless of gender. Women may be taking a more career minded view, while men are becoming more family oriented.

Gunavathy (2007) in the study among married women employees of BPO companies outlined

**(e) Child Care**

S. Padma & M. Sudhir Reddy (2013) studied that the demographics of the children has no significant influence on the Work Life Balance of School Teachers. There is a statistically significant impact of “Support in child care responsibilities from spouse and elder parents” on WLB of school teachers.

G. Shiva (2013) explained the working women having small children are forced to leave their child in daycare or in hands of maid. This creates more tension for them and less concentrate on their work and also not able to give proper care for them at times.

Lan Day (2006) stated in his study that the policies centred on extending parental leave and child care provision promotes a greater flexibility in employment.

**WLB = Healthy life + Satisfactory lives both Professionally and Personally**

**Daily schedule of WLB**

Work Life balance is a Pendulum. Pendulam is a rod with a weight that swings freely backward and forward and at the end it regulates the mechanisms of a clock. Like, Women employee has to satisfy both the work and family.

**Work**

Getting ahead at Work

Completing the task within time

Commuting to/from work

**Family**

Spending valuable time with family

Caring children and elderly parents

Doing chores at home
2.5 Women Employees Career and Life Preferences

The segregation of men and women into different occupations is the principal reason for earnings differences between men and women. The occupational segregation restricts people’s choice of career, especially in the crucial early years of adult life. This was the reason for both the European Commission and ILO belief regarding the occupational segregation can and should be eliminated (Catherin Hakim, 2006).

Rajesh K. Yadav, Nishant Dabhade (2013) have concluded that the women working in all types of professions demonstrating that there are no gender differences in work. The increasing demands at work place, the interface between work life and personal life needs more attention. It leads to stress and such situation affects person’s health both physiologically and psychologically.

Ramadoss (2012) observed in his study that high job control, supervisor support for family related issues and one’s own coping resources were significantly related to positive spillover from work to family and the direction of the relationships were positive for a women in IT enabled sectors.

2.6 Conclusion

To achieve WLB, every woman should set the goal and excel both in career and family. Some of the strategies and skills at work such as planning, organizing and setting limits can be used at home and work place for accomplishing a satisfying and fulfilling well balanced life both professionally and personally. Women employee should care the family both physically and financially to satisfy the family needs. Also work for the accomplishment of organizational objectives and individual upliftment to satisfy the career needs. Organisations need to adopt human resource strategies and policies to overcome the issues of the work life balance of women in the current business environment. Frances and Patricia (200&) concluded that Family Policy, Welfare state provision and labour market structure behave jointly to determine distinct models of work family balance and the financial consequences associated with them.