CHAPTER-III

PROBLEM AND HYPOTHESES

In the past two decades or so, not only the Indian families have undergone significant structural and functional changes, but gender roles are also relatively changing. Still, it is the woman who is expected to accommodate their careers to fit their families (Karambayya & Reilly, 1992). As Bharat (2003) has noted “regardless of wives” employed status, domestic responsibilities continue to be shouldered by women and perceived as their primary duty in life. Full time employment, thus, is an added responsibility for women. Contemporary developments pose a great challenge to the dual career men and women and balancing work and family demands become arduous (Muchinsky, 2000).

Multiplication of roles imposes the double burden of overload and conflict on the working women and that may affect their quality of life. Studies reviewed in this context bring out contradictory findings. While study like Daalen, Sanders and Willemsen (2005) reported work family conflict and less satisfaction among working women. On other side, Swanson (2000) found the healthiest women to have multiple roles (a job, a husband and often children) than men. Similarly with regard to the social-familial roles, there have been some studies which have shown better health (Maclean & Keva, 2004), whereas others have shown single person to fair better than the married person (Rosenfield, 1989). Still others have reported little or no effect of marital status on health.

Combining full time employment within the role of a housewife and a mother presents a serious problem for women since their varied roles as home makers, and as providers working outside their homes are not given due recognition and the argument is that the place of women is the home. The traditional role model sees the ideal situation as the one in which husband is the primary breadwinner and earning a wage is not seen to be of intrinsic value to a women’s life, rather as an exception, a kind of added extra. In the contrary, another view regards employment as a key aspect of woman existence, and argue that with the help of paid work, women can realize their
potential and escape their subordination to men. Having a formal work apart from the unpaid household work has become a virtual necessity for women, no matter to which class they belong. It has become essential for their self respect, autonomy and employment. The rapidly increasing number of women in the workforce has given rise to a surge of research aimed at measuring such an assessment is especially important at their particular juncture when demographic trends suggest that the number of employed women is increasing and that the paid employment will be a central component in most women’s life experience.

Regarding work-family issues, there is ongoing evidence suggesting that a lack of work and family balance lead to work-family conflict (Grzywacz and Bass, 2003; Major, Klein & Ehrhart, 2002). Hence, researchers have focussed on the negative aspects of simultaneously participating in work and family roles. In contrast, researchers like Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne & Grzywacz, 2006; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006) are beginning to shift the focus from these negative aspects to discovering the positive potential available to those individuals who enjoying a full joyful life. By becoming work and family role an emerging body of research is now showing the benefits derived from multiple role participation.

It is evident that work lives can either enhance or detract family lives. In the same manner, family lives can have positive or negative influences on work-attitudes, behaviours, and outcomes. For instance, long working hours, over-involvement in work and job stress may produce distress within the family domain, withdrawal from family responsibilities and adversely affect one’s overall quality of life. Similarly, extensive care-giving responsibilities and intensive involvement with family activities can limit individual’s career choices and aspirations and negatively affect their work-involvement, job-satisfaction and intention to continue their employment. In contrast, there are several resources derived from one’s work-role, such as income, job-autonomy and social support, that can positively influence one’s experiences and well-being. Because both work and family lives have a profound influence on one another, understanding the linkage between work and family roles has important implications.
The role of paid worker is a source of self-esteem, self-identity and self-efficacy. High self-esteem is one of the strongest predictors of subjective well-being. Many studies have found a relationship between self-esteem and subjective well-being (Alavi & Askaripur, 2003; Crocker & Welfe, 2002; Greenberg et al., 1992;), although this effect has been weak or complex in several studies (Reid & Ziegler, 1977; Walk & Telleen, 1976). Further, Abod and Conway (1992) found a relationship between self-esteem and general wellness behaviour. Rivas, Torres & Colleagues (1995) found a significant relationship between self-esteem that accounted for a significant percent of variance in mental health behaviour, social health behaviour and total behaviour. In contrary, Baustetister, Campbell, Krueger & Vohs (2003) concluded that self-esteem has little association with health behaviour. Malhotra and Sachdeva (2000) found that more the social support and self-esteem, more is the role satisfaction and hence better quality of life.

Self-efficacy is an important aspect of self-concept. It has been found to be intimately associated with capacity to change one’s situation and as a predictor of behaviour. Bandura (1997) found that individual with high self-efficacy beliefs reported strong feelings of well-being and high self-esteem in general. Similar findings have been reported by Luszcynska et al. in 2009. Self-efficacy has been reported to reduce anxiety and depression (Ghaderi, 2009; Schuarzer, 2007; Taylor et al., 1991)

As the self concept is the individual’s knowledge about their inner power, that may or may not be related to quality of life. This issue has been investigated because quality of life influenced by a number of psychological traits, but which trait effect to what extent can not be justified.

Individual’s quality of life is not only affected by psychological factors, but personality disposition also play an important role in individual’s standing on relevant traits may pre-dispose him or her to be more reactive to certain environmental events and less reactive to others. In other words, quality of life is not merely based on the events that occur, but rather on how people react to those events. Understanding women’s beliefs – the way she attributes the things and practice relating to work-life balance and health is essential in designing effective intervention programmes to
promote their health and well-being. Cheng and Furnham (2003) investigated that optimistic attributional style in positive situations was a stronger predictor of happiness. Some studies suggest that optimistic attribution style interventions have a positive effect on an individual’s well-being (Gillham et al., 2001; Myers, 1993; Seligman, 1991).

Further, human being a social creature has to adjust himself in the society. All the adjustment made by the individual to so many stresses is guided by one basic motive – to struggle for survival and for the betterment of life or to live life at its best. This may be referred to as good quality of life. Now-a-days, this fashionable concept is of great importance. The concept of quality of life has attracted much research attention of researchers in different disciplines. Using ‘quality of life’ as search term, computer search conducted in November, 2010 showed that there were 313,000,000 studies related to this issue. And, using ‘quality of life and working women in India” as search term, identical research showed that there were 8,090,000 studies. These figures clearly suggest the significance of this area to be researched. The existing research studies on quality of life are pre-dominantly conducted in the west and there is strong need to conduct it in India and specially on working women.

Many studies have investigated the relationship between the amount of the time spent at work and work family conflict. Frone, Yardley and Markel (1997) found that time spent on family activities has been found to be positively related to family-to-work conflict. These results are in consonance with several other researches (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Pleck, Stain & Lang, 1980; Wallace, 1997).

The picture emerging out of the findings of the researches reviewed is rather conflicting in self-esteem and work-family relationship. Surprisingly, a few studies have shown the relationship of attributional style and well-being. Social cognition (attribution – to understand the causes of other’s behaviour) play an important role in perception – impression formation of the world and other individuals. So, there is a need to find out how attributional style and work family linkage are linked to quality of life. Further, length of stay at work-place may influence this relationship work-hours can be a determinantal factor in the assessment of quality of life. Although a positive correlation between work-hours and work family conflict has been
established empirically but there is dearth of studies in its relation to the quality of life. This area need to be probed into.

Further, the present piece of research has been undertaken to explore the relationship of working women’s perception of self and of others, with a focus on attribution style, work-family linkage, as are associated with different domains of quality of life.

Thus, with the purpose examining interrelationship between work family linkage, psychological attributes – attributional style, self-esteem, self-efficacy and quality of life of women in paid job, the present study was carried out to answer the following questions:

1. What type of relationship exist between quality of life (physical, psychological, social relationship and environmental), work-family linkage, attributional style, self-esteem and self-efficacy?
2. Is there any difference between QOL of working women on the basis of the length of work-hours/schedule?
3. Whether the predictors of quality of life (physical, psychological, social relationship and environmental) varies in the context of work-hours/schedule?

For answering these above mentioned queries the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. There would be significant correlation between work-family linkage and quality of life in physical, psychological, social relationship and environmental domains.
2. There would be significant correlation between attributional style and quality of life in all the four domains.
3. Self-esteem and Self-efficacy would be significantly correlated with quality of life in all the four domains.
4. The quality of life of working women would be significantly different on the basis of their work-hours/schedule.
The predictors of all the four domains of quality of life (physical, psychological, social relationship and environmental) would be different for women working for less/eight or more than eight hours/day.

For accomplishing the objectives, the above stated hypotheses would be tested by adopting the methodology to be discussed in the next chapter.

With this we may now pass on to Chapter IV dealing with Design and Methodology.