ABSTRACT

Balancing work and family domain has become a growing concern for every individual over the years particularly for working mothers. Thus, this study aimed at exploring the various issues encountered by women working in paid employment within the rural and urban areas of Sikkim while managing their work and family lives. The study attempted to understand the perceptions and experiences of balancing their work and family domain by working women. It also tried to highlight the conflicting and facilitating factors responsible for affecting their lives. The study also analysed the various work and family related issues with which the working women dealt on a daily basis. In addition, various coping strategies and techniques employed by these women to deal with the pressures of work and family domain has been discussed. A qualitative research approach has been adopted in order to gather empirical evidence as well as insights into the lives of women. The main method of collecting data for this study was personally administered questionnaires, an in-depth interview along with observation of the respondent’s behaviour and the circumstances surrounding the interview by the researcher. The area of this study was two districts namely Gangtok (East) and Namchi (South) of Sikkim. The sample size was 100 working women from both rural and urban areas of Sikkim. Respondents were chosen from various occupations like doctors, lawyers, bureaucrats, lecturers, teachers, nurses, office clerks and casual workers from different Government and private institutions located in Sikkim. The data revealed that gender in interwoven in the management of work and family roles. However, there were variations in the responses given by respondents with regard to balance. Most explanations given by them highlighted the coping strategies used for managing both the domains whether it meant separating or integrating the two spheres.