**A STUDY ON WORK LIFE BALANCE TOWARDS WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP WITHIN SURAT CITY**

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**Abstract:**

This research investigates the work-life balance of women entrepreneurs in Surat city. It explores the challenges they face in managing their professional and personal responsibilities and identifies key factors that influence their ability to maintain equilibrium. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, the study highlights the impact of time constraints, societal expectations, and business demands on women entrepreneurs. It reveals that support systems such as family assistance, flexible work arrangements, and government initiatives play a vital role in facilitating work-life balance. The findings emphasize the importance of time management, task delegation, and leveraging technological tools to enhance productivity and reduce stress. The research underscores the need for policies and programs that promote work-life balance to ensure the long-term sustainability and well-being of women entrepreneurs.

**Keywords:**

Work-life balance, women entrepreneurship, gender bias, business sustainability, Personal and Professional Responsibilities

**Introduction:**

In recent years, women entrepreneurship has emerged as a significant force driving economic growth and societal change. Women entrepreneurs play a vital role in contributing to the economy by creating jobs, fostering innovation, and introducing diverse business perspectives. However, despite their growing presence, women entrepreneurs often face substantial challenges in balancing their professional and personal responsibilities.

The concept of work-life balance has become increasingly relevant in this context, as women strive to manage their entrepreneurial ventures alongside their family and social commitments. Work-life balance refers to the equilibrium between work-related obligations and personal life activities, which is essential for overall well-being and productivity. For women entrepreneurs, this balance is often difficult to achieve due to factors such as time constraints, gender biases, and the dual burden of managing business and household responsibilities.

This study aims to explore the work-life balance of women entrepreneurs in Surat city, highlighting the challenges they encounter and the strategies they adopt to overcome them. By examining factors such as time management, family support, and the role of government initiatives, the research seeks to provide insights into how women entrepreneurs can effectively balance their professional and personal lives. The findings are expected to contribute valuable recommendations for policymakers, business associations, and support networks to foster a more enabling environment for women entrepreneurs.

**Literature review:**

**Dr. Bhavna Taneja & Dr. Parimal Kumar, (2024), Work Life Balance of Women Entrepreneurs of India:** The study examines to identify the critical factors that influence the work-life balance (WLB) of Indian women entrepreneurs in the current business environment and the various women's socio-demographic characteristics associated with their capacity to balance work and family life (i.e. age, education). The data was collected from 126 Indian women business owners. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out to see if there were any significant mean differences in the attitudes of the women entrepreneurs towards WLB across areas such age, education, time management, work relationships, health, family, and social life. Data was collected from 126 women entrepreneurs. Other than the variables mentioned there can be other variables which may impact work life balance. The study found, WLB is negatively predicted by schooling, issues with dependent care, and having too many family/social obligations and responsibilities, while WLB is positively predicted by the age of the female entrepreneur, family and social support, health-related issues, and time management.

**Anisha T.M, Anushree. K.R (2023), Study on Work-Life Balance of Women Entrepreneurs:** This study examines to assess the dual conflicting responsibilities between entrepreneurial and domestic work. To suggest appropriate measures of work-life balance for women entrepreneurs. This is a qualitative research study. Research has been done on the basis of secondary data. Secondary data was collected from websites, journals and previous research papers on related topics. Descriptive research design has been used for this purpose. The study found that work and family are the two prominent important aspects in the life of a working women, maintaining a balance between these aspects are the toughest job for them. Involving in entrepreneurial work helps them in achieving confidence and to control their work and personal life together.

**Supriya, Anand (2023), Work-Life Balance of Women Entrepreneurs:** This study examines on assessing the Work-Life Balance (WLB) of women employees, emphasizing cultural aspects of organizations that were often overlooked in previous research. Data were collected from 45 women entrepreneurs through both online and offline methods. The WLB was measured using a scale developed by Mathew and Panchanatham (2011), and statistical analyses, including Pearson correlation, were applied to understand the relationships between various factors and WLB. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between role overload, health quality, dependent care, and WLB.

**By Shubhi Mishra (2023): A Study of Work-Life Balance of Women Entrepreneurs.** The study examines the evolving role of women in entrepreneurship highlights their motivations, challenges, and societal impact. Women entrepreneurs are increasingly driven by social needs, economic empowerment, and the quest for self-identity. However, balancing work-life responsibilities remains a significant challenge. Government initiatives, such as MSME schemes and empowerment programs, have supported women's entrepreneurial ventures, contributing to family and national development. Drawing on qualitative data from literature reviews, policy reports, and case studies, the study emp emphasizes the importance of targeted policies and societal changes to address gender-specific challenges. These measures are essential for fostering sustainable entrepreneurial success and achieving broader societal progress.

**Research Methodology:**

The research study focuses on the work-life balance of women entrepreneurs in Surat city, aiming to analyze the challenges they face in managing both professional and personal responsibilities. The objectives include examining the factors influencing work-life balance and exploring strategies adopted by women entrepreneurs. The study employs a descriptive and exploratory research design, providing detailed insights into the topic and uncovering deeper issues. Primary data was collected directly from women entrepreneurs using structured questionnaires, while secondary data was obtained from company records, external documents, journals, and reports. The questionnaire included sections on demographic details, research-related questions, and Likert scale questions to measure opinions. The sampling method used was convenience sampling with a sample size of 100 women entrepreneurs. The data was analyzed using SPSS software, applying Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests to compare and evaluate differences between groups. This methodological approach ensures a comprehensive analysis of the work-life balance among women entrepreneurs, providing valuable insights for future policies and strategies.

**Data Analysis:**

The demographic analysis reveals key insights into the profile of women entrepreneurs in Surat. The majority (56%) of respondents belong to nuclear families, whereas 44% come from joint families. Regarding their business experience, 42% of women have been in business for less than a year, while only 14% have operated for more than a decade. Educationally, 44% have completed graduation, followed by 38% with postgraduate degrees. In terms of income, 28% of respondents earn less than ₹10,000 monthly, whereas 10% earn over ₹1,00,000. The working hours vary significantly, with 52% working between 4-6 hours daily, and only 6% working more than 9 hours.

The Likert scale analysis reveals key factors influencing the work-life balance of women entrepreneurs. Financial challenges and gender bias are notable concerns, with 34% facing difficulty in accessing financial resources and 42% experiencing bias. Balancing work and personal life is a major stressor for 44% of respondents, while 36% struggle with legal and regulatory requirements. On the positive side, 80% receive family support, and 64% find flexible work hours beneficial. Delegating tasks and using technological tools also help, with 60% and 50% respectively recognizing their role in improving work-life balance. Additionally, 56% value professional development, while 40% report that work-related stress impacts their health.

**Mann-Whitney Test:**

**H0:** There is no significant difference in the work-life balance of women entrepreneurs living in joint families compared to those living in nuclear families.

**H1:** There is a significant difference in the work-life balance of women entrepreneurs living in joint families compared to those living in nuclear families.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Mann-Whitney U** | **Wilcoxon W** | **Z** | **Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)** |
| Difficulty in accessing financial resources. | 966 | 1956 | -1.936 | 0.053 |
| Encounter gender bias in entrepreneurial journey. | 750 | 1740 | -3.501 | 0 |
| Managing employees and operational tasks is stressful. | 1186 | 2176 | -0.358 | 0.72 |
| Lack of mentorship and guidance affects entrepreneurial decisions. | 1208 | 2804 | -0.174 | 0.862 |
| Social and cultural norms restrict ability to grow business. | 1144 | 2134 | -0.635 | 0.526 |
| Societal expectations add pressure to perform better as a woman entrepreneur. | 928 | 1918 | -2.222 | 0.026 |
| Legal and regulatory requirements are a major challenge. | 1076 | 2066 | -1.123 | 0.261 |
| Balancing work and personal responsibilities create significant stress. | 876 | 1866 | -2.58 | 0.01 |
| Lack of government support or initiatives affects the sustainability of business. | 1228 | 2824 | -0.029 | 0.977 |
| Often work extended hours, which affects family time. | 1124 | 2114 | -0.785 | 0.433 |
| Family members support in managing household responsibilities. | 1014 | 2610 | -1.59 | 0.112 |
| Feel guilty about not spending enough time with family. | 972 | 2568 | -1.911 | 0.056 |
| The demands of business affect personal relationships. | 1080 | 2070 | -1.098 | 0.272 |
| Have adequate childcare support, allowing to focus on work. | 1108 | 2704 | -0.906 | 0.365 |
| Stress from work affects physical and mental health. | 1072 | 2062 | -1.175 | 0.24 |
| Flexible work hours improve ability to balance work and family life. | 1120 | 2716 | -0.824 | 0.41 |
| Delegation of tasks in business helps in managing work-life balance. | 1196 | 2792 | -0.262 | 0.794 |
| Technological tools help in managing work and family. | 1140 | 2736 | -0.676 | 0.499 |
| The location of business has an impact on work-life balance. | 1132 | 2728 | -0.737 | 0.461 |
| Prioritize tasks to manage both work and family effectively. | 898 | 2494 | -2.441 | 0.015 |
| Seek professional training or courses to improve business skills. | 1186 | 2782 | -0.331 | 0.741 |
| Set clear boundaries between work and family time. | 1168 | 2764 | -0.467 | 0.641 |
| Networking with other women entrepreneurs provides valuable insights. | 1226 | 2822 | -0.044 | 0.965 |
| Regularly evaluate and modify strategies to adapt to changing demands. | 1178 | 2774 | -0.395 | 0.693 |

**Interpretation:** The Mann-Whitney U test results indicate that the factors "Encounter gender bias in entrepreneurial journey" (p = .000), "Societal expectations add pressure to perform better as a woman entrepreneur" (p = .026), "Balancing work and personal responsibilities create significant stress" (p = .010), and "Prioritize tasks to manage both work and family effectively" (p = .015) show statistically significant differences (p < 0.05) between women entrepreneurs living in joint families and those in nuclear families. This suggests that family structure influences how women entrepreneurs experience gender bias, societal expectations, work-life balance stress, and task prioritization. However, for all other factors, the p-values are greater than 0.05, indicating no significant differences. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (H₀) only for these specific factors, while for the rest, we fail to find significant differences in work-life balance based on family structure.

**Kruskal-Wallis Test:**

**H0:** There is no significant difference in the work-life balance of women entrepreneurs based on their highest educational qualification.

**H1:** There is significant difference in the work-life balance of women entrepreneurs based on their highest educational qualification.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | Chi-Square | df | Asymp. Sig. |
| Difficulty in accessing financial resources. | 7.796 | 3 | 0.05 |
| Encounter gender bias in entrepreneurial journey. | 1.887 | 3 | 0.596 |
| Managing employees and operational tasks is stressful. | 0.908 | 3 | 0.824 |
| Lack of mentorship and guidance affects entrepreneurial decisions. | 3.605 | 3 | 0.307 |
| Social and cultural norms restrict ability to grow business. | 3.923 | 3 | 0.27 |
| Societal expectations add pressure to perform better as a woman entrepreneur. | 8.94 | 3 | 0.03 |
| Legal and regulatory requirements are a major challenge. | 6.226 | 3 | 0.101 |
| Balancing work and personal responsibilities create significant stress. | 9.913 | 3 | 0.019 |
| Lack of government support or initiatives affects the sustainability of business. | 3.279 | 3 | 0.351 |
| Often work extended hours, which affects family time. | 0.938 | 3 | 0.816 |
| Family members support in managing household responsibilities. | 1.54 | 3 | 0.673 |
| Feel guilty about not spending enough time with family. | 2.228 | 3 | 0.527 |
| The demands of business affect personal relationships. | 1.147 | 3 | 0.766 |
| Have adequate childcare support, allowing to focus on work. | 3.898 | 3 | 0.273 |
| Stress from work affects physical and mental health. | 3.538 | 3 | 0.316 |
| Flexible work hours improve ability to balance work and family life. | 7.173 | 3 | 0.067 |
| Delegation of tasks in business helps in managing work-life balance. | 6.23 | 3 | 0.101 |
| Technological tools help in managing work and family. | 6.885 | 3 | 0.076 |
| The location of business has an impact on work-life balance. | 5.228 | 3 | 0.156 |
| Prioritize tasks to manage both work and family effectively. | 5.071 | 3 | 0.167 |
| Seek professional training or courses to improve business skills. | 6.048 | 3 | 0.109 |
| Set clear boundaries between work and family time. | 3.372 | 3 | 0.338 |
| Networking with other women entrepreneurs provides valuable insights. | 5.934 | 3 | 0.115 |
| Regularly evaluate and modify strategies to adapt to changing demands. | 1.059 | 3 | 0.787 |

**Interpretation:** The Kruskal-Wallis test results indicate that the factors "Societal expectations add pressure to perform better as a woman entrepreneur" (p = .030) and "Balancing work and personal responsibilities create significant stress" (p = .019) show statistically significant differences (p < 0.05) based on the highest educational qualification of women entrepreneurs. This suggests that education level influences how women entrepreneurs perceive these challenges. However, all other factors have p-values greater than 0.05, indicating no significant differences. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis (H₀) for most factors, except for societal expectations and work-life balance stress, where we find partial support for the alternative hypothesis (H₁).

**Conclusion:**

This research offers valuable insights into the importance of work-life balance for women entrepreneurs in Surat. It highlights how balancing professional and personal responsibilities is essential for their long-term success and well-being. Women entrepreneurs face unique challenges, including time constraints, societal expectations, and business demands, which require effective strategies to manage both aspects of life. The study emphasizes the crucial role of support systems, such as family assistance and flexible work arrangements, in helping women overcome these challenges.

Furthermore, the research underscores that fostering a business ecosystem that promotes work-life balance can lead to more sustainable and successful enterprises. By developing resilience, enhancing time management skills, and leveraging external support networks, women entrepreneurs can better manage stress and improve productivity. Encouraging supportive policies and increasing awareness will create an environment where women entrepreneurs can thrive both personally and professionally.

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