A STUDY ON THE FAMILY-WORK CONFLICT AMONG MARRIED WORKING WOMEN IN PATTAMBI MUNICIPALITY

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ABSTRACT:

Family-work conflict is a significant challenge faced by many married working women as they strive to balance their professional and familial responsibilities. This conflict arises from the competing demands and expectations of work and family life, resulting in stress, strain, and feelings of being overwhelmed. This paper explores the family-work conflict among married working women in Pattambi municipality of Palakkad district Kerala. The study was conducted on 80 married working women selected randomly from Pattambi. The intensity of family- work conflict and the factors contributing towards the conflict is analysed and it is observed that the majority of women are facing family-work conflict which is contributed mainly by family-related factors like the attitude of in-laws, husband etc.
Keywords: Family- work conflict, married working women, intensity of conflict, Municipality, Strain.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Family-work conflict refers to the challenge or strain that arises when there is an imbalance or conflict between the demands of work and family responsibilities. Among married working women, family-work conflict can be particularly prevalent due to the dual roles and expectations they have to fulfil. Addressing family-work conflict requires a multi-faceted approach involving individuals, employers, and society as a whole. Family-work conflict is a complex issue, and each individual's situation is unique. Finding the right balance requires experimentation, adaptation, and ongoing efforts to align work and family responsibilities effectively.

Married working women often juggle multiple roles as employees, spouses, and mothers. The expectations and responsibilities associated with each role can become overwhelming, leading to conflicts in managing time and energy. Demanding jobs or long

work hours can limit the amount of time available for family and personal life. This can lead to feelings of guilt or neglect towards family responsibilities. Insufficient workplace policies and support systems, such as flexible work schedules, parental leave, or childcare facilities, can exacerbate family-work conflict. The availability and effectiveness of support systems, such as spousal support, family assistance, and access to childcare, can impact family-work conflict. Lack of support can amplify stress and decrease the ability to manage competing demands successfully. When there is a lack of support, women may feel torn between their work and family obligations. Societal expectations and traditional gender roles can place additional pressure on married working women. They may face challenges in negotiating household chores and childcare responsibilities with their spouses, leading to increased conflict and stress. Balancing work and family responsibilities can create significant psychological strain for married working women. Constantly switching between roles and feeling pulled in multiple directions can lead to stress, burnout, and a diminished sense of well-being. Some married working women may experience societal or self-imposed guilt for prioritizing their careers or pursuing personal goals. This internal conflict can intensify family-work conflict and create emotional distress. Advancements in technology have made it easier for workers to encroach upon personal and family time. The ability to access work-related tasks and communication outside of traditional working hours blurs the boundaries between work and family life, contributing to conflict.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

(Su, 2023) The influence of family-work conflict on work engagement was studied among female university teachers in China based on the job demand resource model. The researchers examined the connection between family-work conflict, emotional exhaustion, perceived organisational support and work engagement. The researcher established a negative effect of family-work conflict on work engagement. They also found that perceived organisational support plays a partial mediating role between family-work conflict and work engagement. Another finding is that family-work conflict brings out stress, tension, burnout etc. which adversely affect the physical and psychological health of the teachers.

(Jiang, 2023) In another study conducted in China, the researchers stated that an organization expect to have an ideal employee, (Schjoedt, 2021) and the family expect to have a good wife and mother. They examined the bi-directional family-work conflict and job burnout, organizational support and work satisfaction. The researchers found out that the bi-directional family-work conflict and burnout could negatively affect job satisfaction and perceived organizational support could have a positive impact on job satisfaction. They suggested interventions from the part of the university administration aiming at balancing work and family responsibilities which can improve job satisfaction.

(Schjoedt, 2021) Conducted a study among entrepreneurs in the US to examine the mediating effect of stress on the relationship between work and family conflict and satisfaction. They found out that work-to-family conflict was associated with stress and

satisfaction for all entrepreneurs. Also, the family-to-work conflict was related to stress for all entrepreneurs, but was related to satisfaction only to repeat entrepreneurs and not to novice entrepreneurs. They concluded that family-work conflict associated with stress is the same for all entrepreneurs and that associate satisfaction is different for different entrepreneurs.

(Obrenovic, 2020) The impact of family-work conflict and psychological factors on job performance was studied through empirical research. They measured the effects on psychological safety and psychological well-being to explore the association between family-work conflict and job performance. They established a negative impact of family-work conflict on psychological well-being and safety which in turn influence job performance. The researchers established that job performance is influenced indirectly by family-work conflict and directly by psychological safety and well-being.

(Ahmad, 2008) in a review survey found a growing interest towards understanding the interface of work-family roles. Through this survey method, the researcher derived three factors to frame the predictors of the family-work conflict model which are "job-related factors", " family-related factors" and "individual-related factors". The researcher includes various sub-factors for each of these major factors. To study the job-related factors the researcher includes five sub-factors which are "job type", "work time commitment", "job involvement", "role overload" and "job flexibility". To examine the family-related factors the researcher includes sub-factors like "no of children", "life cycle stages", "family involvement "and "child care arrangements". Under the individual factors, the researcher included "life role values", gender role orientation", "locus of control" and "perfectionism". The researcher put forward this model for further study.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Family-work conflict continues to be a significant and ongoing topic of discussion and research. The evolving dynamics of modern work and family life, along with societal shifts, have contributed to the continued relevance of this issue. It requires ongoing research, discussions, and practical solutions to help individuals, organizations, and society at large manage the complexities of balancing work and family responsibilities effectively.

4. OBJECTIVES:

- To ascertain the extent of family-work conflict among married working women
- To analyse the factors contributing to family-work conflict
- To give suggestive measures to lessen the conflict

5. METHODOLOGY:

A descriptive design is used to study the family-work conflict among married working women of Pattambi Municipality (Durairaj & Parvathy, 2022). Data is collected from 80 samples selected through random sampling technique. A well-structured questionnaire is used to collect the primary data. Secondary data was collected from books, journals, articles, etc.

Percentage analysis and weighted average ranking method were used to analyse the data. The intensity of family-work conflict was measured by using the Family-work conflict (WFC) scale (Netemeyer, 1996) of 5 items

5.1 Data analysis:

Table 1: demographic factors of sample respondents

Measurable Variables	Items	No Of Respondents	Percentage
Age group	20-30	16	20
	31-40	38	48
	41-50	19	24
	Above 50	7	9
	Total	80	100
Family type	Nuclear Family	53	66
	Joint Family	27	34
	Total	80	100
Organisation type	Government	12	15
	Private	44	55
	Others	24	30
	Total	80	100
Monthly income	Below 10000	13	16
	10001-20000	44	55
	20001-30000	10	13
	30001-40000	7	9
	Above 40000	6	8
	Total	80	100

Interpretation:

From the above table 1, it is clear that the majority of respondents fall in 31-40 age group. 66% of respondents come from a nuclear family. More than half of the respondents work for private organisations and the majority of the respondents earn a monthly income of 10001-20000.

5.2 Reliability analysis

| Cronbach's Alpha	No of items
.847	25

Interpretation

The reliability of data collection is considered good and reliable as the alpha value is 0.847 which exceeds 0.8

Table 2: Intensity of Conflict

Conflict Intensity	No of respondents	Percentage
High	24	30
Medium	43	54
Low	13	16
Total	80	100

Interpretation:

The above table 2 shows that 54% of the respondents face a medium level of family-work conflict. 30% of the respondents face a high level of conflict. Only 16% have a low level of conflict.
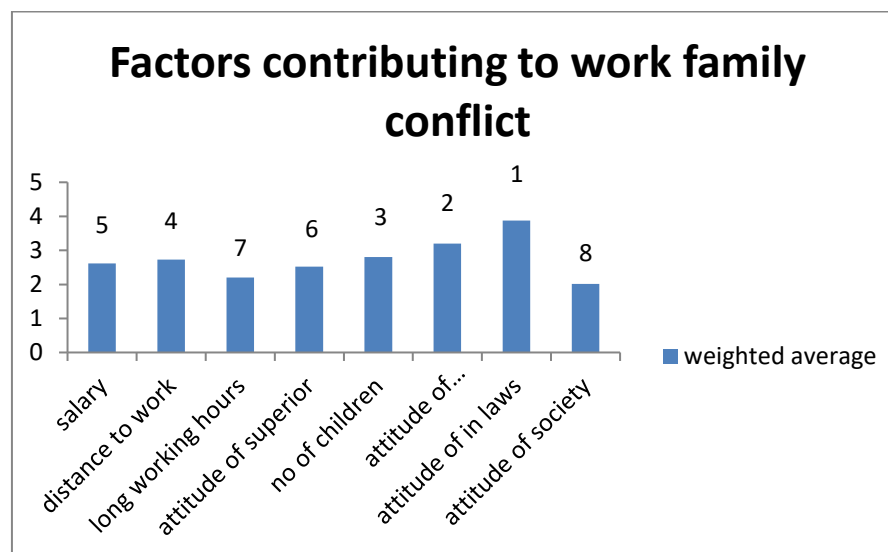
Figure 1: Chart showing the ranks for different factors contributing to family- work conflict.

Interpretation:

From the above chart, it is clear that the major factor contributing to family-work conflict among married working women is the attitude of in-laws followed by the attitude of the husband. The least contributing factor is the attitude of society.

6. FINDINGS:

- Nearly half of the respondents belong to 31-40 age group, more than half of the respondents come from nuclear families and more than half of the respondents work for private organisations.
- Almost all the respondents are facing family-work conflict of which 30% are facing high conflict.
- Factors contributing to these conflicts differ among respondents but the most ranked one is the attitude of in-laws followed by the attitude of husband. The next ranked one is the number of children.

- Family-related factors are creating more conflict than work-related factors as the first three ranks are assigned to family-related factors.

7. SUGGESTION:

- Women should foster open and honest communication with their family members so that they can understand the problems faced by them to an extend.
- As the woman is giving her hand in earning for the family, other members must give their hand in sharing household responsibilities.
- The members of the family should learn to be flexible and adjust to the situation.
- Time management and work prioritisation should be employed which will reduce the conflict to an extend
- Kids should be encouraged to be self-dependent in their daily routines like taking baths, having food etc.
- Organizations need to recognize and support the unique needs of married working women by implementing family-friendly policies and flexible work arrangements.

8. CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, family-work conflict is a common challenge faced by many married working women. Balancing the demands of work and family can be overwhelming, leading to stress and strain on both fronts. However, by implementing strategies that prioritize open communication, shared responsibilities, and self-care, married working women can strive for a healthier balance between their personal and professional lives, leading to increased well-being and overall satisfaction.

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