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RESEARCH ARTICLE

CHALLENGES FACED BY FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS IN MANAGING THEIR WORK LIFE BALANCE IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

In developed countries such as Pakistan, the issues of work life balance in male and female entrepreneurs are significantly evident. These issues have given rise to increasing concerns about the work life balance challenges faced by the female entrepreneurs who have to manage their personal and professional life at the same time (Noor, 2004). Despite the growing opportunities for the female entrepreneurs in Pakistan, the issues and challenges for women entrepreneurs still exists in the form of lack of family support and funding limitations (Jamali, 2006). When it come to a developing country like Pakistan, problems for the women entrepreneurs are significant and there is lack of motivation in the form off a role model which is another factor that affect the adoption of entrepreneurship among women in Pakistan (Mangi, 2015). The purpose of current research study is to investigate the work life balance issues faced by the female entrepreneurs in Pakistan. In this regard, the work life balance practices of the women entrepreneurs in Pakistan will be explored and the conflicts that women entrepreneurs face while managing their personal and professional roles will be investigated.

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INTRODUCTION

In developed countries such as Pakistan, the issues of work life balance in male and female entrepreneurs are significantly evident. These issues have given rise to increasing concerns about the work life balance challenges faced by the female entrepreneurs who have to manage their personal and professional life at the same time (Noor, 2004). Despite the growing opportunities for the female entrepreneurs in Pakistan, the issues and challenges for women entrepreneurs still exists in the form of lack of family support and funding limitations (Jamali, 2006). Some other research studies have highlighted that, women entrepreneurs are reluctant to engage in the risk-taking behavior and that is why cannot afford the hardships of the business startups which restrain their chances of success (Sexton and Bowman-Upton, 1990). When it come to a developing country like Pakistan, problems for the women entrepreneurs are significant and there is lack of motivation in the form off a role model which is another factor that affect the adoption of entrepreneurship among women in Pakistan (Mangi, 2015). Even when women entrepreneurs in Pakistan successfully establish a business of their own, the problems exist. For instance, Doherty (2004) identified that, women in the top management position as entrepreneur's face challenges of commitment as they have to work for long hours and has to stay in the workplace for long hours in order to act as a role model for the other employees.

This long working hour culture might be feasible for the men who do not have to take care of the family or their children. But this culture, disrupts the work life balance of the women entrepreneurs in a great deal as they have to take care of their family after getting free from their work. Therefore, in a patriarchal culture like Pakistan, it is really hard for women to balance their personal and professional roles as they are expected to take care of their parents, children and family as well. Despite the fact that women entrepreneurs in Pakistan face challenges of work life balance, there is dearth of research on this topic. As explained by Lewis, Gamble and Rapoport (2007), the globalization has influenced the organizational settings in both developed and developing countries. Besides, the research studies on the work life balance are not limited to the western world, as the women entrepreneurship is in emergence in the developing countries as well.

Although, most of the research studies on the work life balance practices are limited to the developed nations (White, Hill, McGovern, Mills & Smeaton, 2003; Lewis et al., 2007). However, Shelton (2006) identified that, there is lack of research on the issues pertaining to the women entrepreneurs in the management of their work life balance. On the other hand, most of the research studies in the past have been limited to the outcomes of the work life balance but few research studies have emphasized on the provision of the strategies and techniques to deal with the issues of the work life balance (Smith and Gardner, 2007; Shelton, 2006; Bruening and Dixon, 2007).

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In the developed countries like Pakistan, female entrepreneurs have been facing challenges in the form of work life balance issues. Although, there are few research studies on investigating the issues of work life balance faced by the male and female entrepreneurs in Pakistan (Nadeem and Abbas, 2009). However, there is dearth of research on investigating the issues faced by the female entrepreneurs in Pakistan. As a result, no strategies or techniques have been proposed for women entrepreneurs in order to resolve their issues of work life balance. The purpose of current research study is to investigate the work life balance issues faced by the female entrepreneurs in Pakistan. In this regard, the work life balance practices of the women entrepreneurs in Pakistan will be explored and the conflicts that women entrepreneurs face while managing their personal and professional roles will be investigated.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Grzywacz and Carlson (2007), work life balance can be described as the extent to which professional roles of an individual interrupt the family life or family life or roles of an individual inhibits work performance. In other words, absence of the conflicts between work and family roles is termed as work life balance (WLB). In addition, Clark (2000) referred work life balance as the degree to which an individual performs both professional and family roles adequately and satisfactorily. The business world is becoming dynamic and competitive with the advancements in technology and increase in globalization. To survive and sustain in the competitive environment, continuous innovation, and an increase in productivity has become crucial. Entrepreneurship is getting more recognition because of its strong relationship with innovation and economic growth and development. According to Hisrich, Langan-Fox and Grant (2007), the economic growth is characterized by the positive contribution of individuals who like to innovate and initiate their own business commonly referred as 'entrepreneurs'. Entrepreneurs are always willing to take risk in order to exploit the opportunities they find around them. Hisrich (2005) defined entrepreneurship as a process in which individuals create and develop something innovative and creative by investing their resources and time and take various form of risks like financial, physical, psychological and social risks. In return, they get satisfaction and sense of independence. Similarly, Brockhaus (1980) has described entrepreneurship as the willingness of the individual to start a new business. Hence in the light of above mentioned definition, entrepreneurship is all about creating something new by investing resources and showing willingness to take risks to avail the opportunities in the environment.

Some major issues prevailing in the developing countries are unemployment, poverty and unstable development. Dev and Mahajan (2003) have identified unemployment as one of the most significant problem faced by the most developing countries in the world. Pakistan is a developing country and unemployment is one of the biggest issues besides poverty and political tension. Haque (2011) identified entrepreneurship as a solution to address the issue of unemployment in Pakistan.

The role of the young entrepreneurs is crucial in improving the economic growth of Pakistan as highlighted by Ullha, Ahmad, Manzoor, Hussain and Farooq (2012). According to their research findings, the young entrepreneurs comprises of approximately 25 million Pakistanis ranging from 15 to 24 years of age. However, the young entrepreneurs in Pakistan are

facing number of issues and problems that restrain their access to resources as well as perception of entrepreneurship. Some common issues that affect the young entrepreneurs in Pakistan towards entrepreneurship include lack of business and management skills, poor infrastructure, lack of sufficient resources including energy and money etc. Moreover, young entrepreneurs also face restrictions from family which negatively affects their self-confidence. Family support has been regarded highly significant in case of female entrepreneurs (Halkias, Nwajiuba, Harkiolakis&Caracatsanis, 2011). According to the Federal Bureau of Statistics, from 2010-2011 Pakistan has been ranked as 9th largest country in the globe with respect to the labor force size. Women account for 50 percent of the entire population of Pakistan. However, despite such significant ratio, the economic participation of the women is quite low as compare to men in Pakistan. There are many reasons due to which women in a developing country like Pakistan lag behind men in terms of their economic participation. Roomi and Harrison (2010) have highlighted that, women do not receive any support or encouragement from their families because of gender practices which limits their independence and to work freely like men. Moreover, Shah (2002) has explained that there are numerous factors that affect the work and family choices of women in Pakistan. These factors include culture, traditions, customs and values as well as family practices etc. The socio cultural values have been identified as the major obstacles towards women's economic participation in Pakistan (Roomi& Parrot, 2008).

There are many research evidences that validate the existence of certain barrier that inhibits women entrepreneurship in Pakistan. As explained by Afzal (2014), the socio economic growth of Pakistan has been negatively affected by the geo political crisis in Pakistan which has also created many barriers which hinder the adoption of entrepreneurship among women in Pakistan. In addition, Palaniappan, Ramgopal and Mani (2012) have also explained that, adoption of entrepreneurship among the female entrepreneurs is negatively affected by the poor leadership, lack of sufficient financial resources and its strategic allocation. In addition to these barriers, which are continuous, female entrepreneurs also face challenge of their work life balance. It is quite difficult for the women entrepreneurs to manage the work as well as effectively fulfill the family responsibilities at the same time in the presence of numerous barriers that inhibit successful entrepreneurship. In a masculine society, it is great challenge for women to manage their work and family life because they are expected to take care of household and children only. Following is the conceptual framework that has been adopted for this research study:

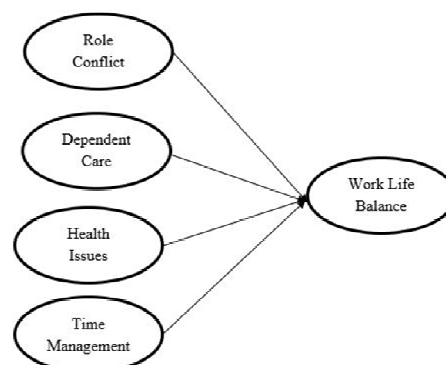


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

On the basis of the proposed conceptual model for this study, following hypotheses can be proposed:

- H1=** Role conflict significantly affects the work life balance of women entrepreneurs in Pakistan.
H2= Dependent care is significantly related to the work life balance of female entrepreneurs in Pakistan.
H3= Health issues of female entrepreneurs in Pakistan significantly affect their work life balance.
H4= Time management of female entrepreneur has a significant relationship with their work life balance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The target population in this study comprised of the female entrepreneur in Pakistan. Where, the sample size consists of 150 female entrepreneurs including business women and home-based entrepreneurs of Lahore, Pakistan. The data was analyzed empirically using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). In order to test the hypotheses, correlation analysis was performed.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Following table indicates the descriptive statistics of the demographic profile of the target respondents. Age of the female entrepreneurs is one of the most crucial variable. It is clear that, there is a greater proportion of the female entrepreneurs who face the issues of the work life balance belonging to the age group of 16-25 years and above 46 years old, which is evident from the 27.3 percentage. It can also be seen from the table below that, education of the female entrepreneurs has been remained a significant demographic variable. It is clear that, 22.7% of the target respondents were either graduate or undergraduate. Where, 14% of the female entrepreneurs were diploma holders. Marital status is the strongest predictor of the work life balance issues of female entrepreneurs in Pakistan. It can be seen that, 30.7 percent of the target respondents are married, where 15.3 percent are divorced and 16.7% are widowed. 20% are unmarried. It can be inferred that, except the unmarried, most of the female entrepreneurs are either married, widowed or divorced. In order to test the hypotheses, Pearson Correlation test was used.

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics of the demographic profile

Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	16-25 years	41	27.3%
	26-35 years	33	22%
	36-45 years	35	23.3%
	46 and above	41	27.3%
Education	Diploma Holder	21	14%
	Undergraduate	34	22.7%
	Graduate	34	22.7%
	Masters	29	19.3%
	Other	32	21.3%
Marital Status	Unmarried	30	20%
	Married	46	30.7%
	Divorce	23	15.3%
	Widowed	25	16.7%
	Other	26	17.3%

Table 4.2 Results of the Pearson correlation analysis

		Correlations				
		My work and family life is perfectly balanced	Role Conflict	Dependent Care	Health Related Issues	Time Management
My work and family life is perfectly balanced	Pearson Correlation	1	.167*	.182*	.221**	.308**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.041	.026	.007	.000
Role Conflict	Pearson Correlation	.167*	1	.118	-.162*	.224**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.041		.149	.048	.006
Dependent Care	Pearson Correlation	.182*	.118	1	.302**	.193*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	.149		.000	.018
Health Related Issues	Pearson Correlation	.221**	-.162*	.302**	1	.163*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.048	.000		.046
Time Management	Pearson Correlation	.308**	.224**	.193*	.163*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.006	.018	.046	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.3 Results of ANOVA

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	30.598	4	7.649	6.299	.000 ^b
	Residual	176.075	145	1.214		
	Total	206.673	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Work life balance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Role Conflict, Dependent Care, Health related issues, Time Management

The results of the Pearson Correlation test indicate that, all the values are significant at 0.05. Role conflict has a weak correlation with work life balance of the female entrepreneurs in Pakistan at 0.41 which indicates that, role conflict affects the work life balance of the female entrepreneurs but the relationship is not very significant. Therefore, the hypothesis H1 is accepted although there is a weaker correlation between role conflict and work life balance of female entrepreneurs. The relationship between dependent care and work life balance of female entrepreneurs in Pakistan has a weak correlation of .026 which is less than .05 which also means the second hypothesis has been accepted. It therefore, indicates that dependent care is related to the work life balance of female entrepreneurs in Pakistan. Afterwards, the relationship between health-related issues of female entrepreneurs is found significant at .007 which is significant. Therefore, the third hypothesis has been accepted as well. The relationship between time management and work life balance of female entrepreneurs is also found significant at .000 which shows a stronger correlation. Therefore, the results of the Pearson correlation indicate that all the hypotheses are accepted. Therefore, the four dependent variables i.e. role conflict, dependent care, health related issues and time management affect the work life balance of female entrepreneurs in Pakistan as shown in the table below:

In addition, regression analysis was also done using SPSS. Following table indicates the output of Analysis of Variance. The level of significance is .000 which is less than .05 which indicates that, the relationship between dependent and independent variables is significant. The analysis of the data indicates that, all the hypotheses have been accepted and the four independent variables tend to affect the work life balance of the female entrepreneurs.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the challenges faced by the female entrepreneurs in balancing their personal and professional life. In this regard, four most important factors were selected after a thorough literature review which tend to influence the work life balance of the female entrepreneurs. These factors include role conflict, dependent care, health related issues and time management. The findings of the study indicated that, female entrepreneur's in Pakistan find it hard to keep a balance between their personal and work life because of many reasons. First, their professional and personal roles are more demanding and therefore creates obstacles in keeping a balance between these two roles. Second, as the demographic analysis indicates that, most female entrepreneurs are either married, divorced or widowed and therefore have responsibilities of dependent care in the form of parents, parents in law or children which also affects their work life balance. In addition, there is lack of social support when it comes to taking care of their dependents. The study findings also indicated that, female entrepreneurs tend to have health related issues in the form of stress or lack of rest which is mainly because of the role conflicts they face. Finally, time management was another issue faced by the female entrepreneurs in Pakistan which restrains them from giving proper time to the family or enjoying their family or social life. In conclusion, it can be stated that there are more issues of female entrepreneurs when it comes to keeping a balance between their personal and professional life as compared to other employed female

entrepreneurs who usually have childcare facilities and other privileges given by their organizations.

There are certain limitations to this research study such as small sample size and the study is limited to the region of Lahore only. In future, same research study can be conducted by investigating these factors in other regions of Pakistan or sample size can be increased. Future research study can be conducted to examine other issues that can affect the work life balance of the female entrepreneurs in Pakistan such as cultural barriers and local norms in the rural areas of Pakistan.

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