

A Review of Indian Working Women from Freedom Struggle Time to Entrepreneurial Time

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ABSTRACT

The concept of women working and having remarkable work done is not new to modern India. Indian women are working with shoulder to shoulder of men and contributing in almost all the fields like financial institutions, educational institutions, defense sector, entrepreneur segment, politics, IT sector, engineering sector, etc. The present study explored the issues and challenges faced by working women from freedom struggle time to entrepreneurial time. Based on the review of various literatures, study found that women role in ancient and medieval period was quite different from those of the present world. Ancient India had great respect for women. Women have high positions and roles in society. In Medieval India, invaders had deeply disrupted Indian women image. Modern India is working on shaping back Women's image as educated, intelligentsia, high profile, professionals, corporate, business elegance, in global perspective.

Keywords: Indian Women, Work Life Balance, Working Women.

Introduction:

Indian women were always respected across the world of her dignity. She has been managing excellently her duties and responsibilities in all forms of womanhood. Women as mother is the first guru of her genre's right cultural and ethical foundation. Maintaining their traditional epitome, they have learned and worked to the best in varied fields and spheres of life. At the time of scriptures, there was the important role were assigned to women in India. Many studies explained that the women in ancient India, enjoyed equality in term of decisions of life. In old Vedas it was also highlighted that Pre-Vedic period women occupied significant roles compared to men. In that time, as an individual's women were also managed large trade and commerce independently. There were many instances in which women have given the guidance of right path. In Rig-Veda, Upanishads, Jin Samosharans, women were allowed to attend conferences and provides suggestions. Jain (1993) revealed in his study that in Jain way of living system those women were bold enough to protect her chastity and were saved from the torture that results from evils. A thinking that conferred the right to liberation of each and every being would not confine itself within the bonds of casteism. But, during the medieval time and onwards, conditions of women were not favorable especially at work place. Therefore, this study explored the issues and challenges faced by Indian working women from freedom struggle time to entrepreneurial time.

Objectives:

To explore the changes that have taken places in the life of working women from freedom struggle time to entrepreneurial time.

Methodology:

The Study: The study is exploratory in nature which explored the changes that have taken places in the life of working women. Study also explored the issues and challenges faced by working women from freedom struggle time to entrepreneurial time. The articles published from 1990 to 2016 were analyzed.

The Sample: The relevant data comprised of articles, journals, books and literature available on internet from various research organizations and government establishments. More than 30 articles were reviewed for study.

Data Analysis: As the study is exploratory, and based on the review of literature, no statistical tools have been applied. Work life balance issue is not a new issue, but through the various review of literature this study analyzed the working conditions of women since freedom struggle. Study also concluded about the issues and challenges faced by the working women.

The Review of Literature:

India's Freedom Struggle: Mody (2000) Explained in his study that long period of freedom struggle was weeping and tearful which was borne by Indian women, silently and cheerfully. Among various resistance movements in the villages, the illiterate women played great role as comrades of their men folk. Mahatma Gandhi remarked, from a resolution passed on January 26, 1931. The sacrifice made by the women of India would occupied the leading place, whenever, the history of India's fight for Independence comes to be written.

Freedom fighter stories highlighted that our women came forwarded and straggled when most of the freedom fighter men were in prison. An embodiment of patriotism, Lakshmi Bai, the empress of a limitless empire of glory. Hugh Rose praised her bravery and commented that she is the most dangerous among all Indian leaders, which is a commendable tag. Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, named 'The Rani of Jhansi Regiment', for women brigade in Indian National Army (INA). The co-ruler of Awadh, Begum Hazrat Mahal was another woman who led the revolt of 1857. The Bhopal Begums were trained in martial arts and didn't observe purdah. In 1917, Indian National Congress supported the first women's delegation to order women's political rights. All India Women's Education Conference was known for major social changes of women which was organized in pune in 1927. There was also a major social reformed taken place in 1929 when Child Marriage Restraint Act was passed, and stipulated the minimum age of girl marriage as fourteen years.

Women's Working Conditions in Modern India: During the period of India's freedom, the role of women have been improved and it was dignifying. The condition were more improved after the independence of India. Nathawat and Mathur (1993) examined the reasons of working women to take up a paid job because of monitory gain, social role enrichment and personal causes. Komarraju et al. (1997) found that the rising number of educated women in India has been accompanied by a steady growth in dual career families. Rajadhyaksha (2004) worked on understanding the treatment of work and family issues within the Indian context. The period after independence saw the laying down of legal foundations for the country which aimed at facilitating and handling of work and home responsibilities.

Samuel (2005) explained the taxonomy related to work life balance in context of the family and work culture. Study also highlighted the conflict due to work life balance issue. Wesley (2005) found in a study of 230 teachers of Coimbatore engineering college, that conflict was more prevalent in case of work to family than family to work conflict. Peeters (2005) found that the pressures from the job and family domains were often mismatched, leading to imbalance. Buddhapriya, (2009) discovered the expectations of the working women in relation to organizational support for better work-life balance and growth in their career. Majority respondents showed their strong preference for provisions like emergency

dependents care, childcare facilitates wellness, flexible working hours, and personal development programs.

Baral (2010) studied 48,537 professionals and revealed that working women and men in India experienced more work family enrichment than the work family conflict. Suggested that organizations were required to incorporate work life balance policies and encourage a culture that support utilizing them to ensure employee commitment and productivity. Dubey et al. (2010) found that a successful work life balance helps in achieving professional and personal goals of a person. A balanced life is when one is able to devote enough time to all spheres of life and don't neglect any of them. Byington (2010) studied number of perspectives of female secondary school administrators on how to balance multiple roles in life and the difficulties and social barriers they faced in doing the same. Doble (2010) studied work life balance across genders. Found that both women and men were experiencing work life imbalance. After liberalization, many Indian organizations introduced a variety of work life balance practices such as flexibility to take care of emergencies at home, flexi times, provision for child care facilities and part time work which were facilitated in many developed countries, but imbalance still existed.

Desai (2011) focused on the effect of marital adjustment and personal expectations on life satisfaction and job satisfaction of working women in India. It was found that the women who worked from home were least stressed, most well adjusted, and the most satisfied with their careers. Walia (2011) examined the relationship among family related variables (parental support, spouse support, household responsibility), work related variables (time flexibility, work autonomy), and individual related variables (gender, age, marital status, work centrality and emotional intelligence,). Study found that higher the emotional intelligence reflect the higher work life balance, better relationship between work and personal life and lesser the interference of personal life with work and vice versa. It was also stated that women gained satisfaction and happiness out of a feeling of motherhood and it does not affected their work life balance. Daphtardar (2013) examined that a majority of women faculty members in Pune's Management Colleges found it difficult to balance work and life. Study concluded that organizational support might bring a suitable balance in their personal and professional life. Ahemad (2013) thought of number of attitudes, beliefs and values of women regarding job anxieties in their work organizations and especially in balancing women personal and work life. Indian business owners were seeing it this way, reporting increases in flexible work arrangements like job sharing, flex-time, tele-work and compressed workweeks. Balamurugan (2016) concluded that work life balance was positively correlated with performance of women. Based on results, organizations could develop a strategy to enhance work-life balance of women and to improve performance management. G.Delina (2013) studied the work-life balance problem existed most among the married working women. Study also explained the degree by which many attributes like working hours, job engagement, personal responsibilities, and affected married working women's work-life balance. Study also explained that it is tough for the working women to take out time for maintaining friendships and their own leisure activities. Muthumani (2013) discovered that developing and creating constructive work environment would build quality of work life of IT professionals. The research carried on 120 respondents of Coimbatore IT Companies. Research depicted a positive correlation among conducive work environment and quality of work life like, Job rotation, relationship between colleagues, career growth and development, smooth relation with supervisor, job enrichment, autonomous work groups, balance with work and non-work life, flexi time and management of employee stress. K.Thriveni (2013) explored the understanding of the effect of family responsibilities on the professional decisions of working women. Shrvanthi (2013) found that work and life programs had the potential to significantly enhance employee morale, retain organizational knowledge and reduce absenteeism, especially in difficult economic times.

Sethi (2014) conducted a survey of 500 females who were working in banks of North India. The result showed that family support and work place support played an important role in maintaining proper work life balance. In a comparative study done by Yadav (2013) revealed that work life balance is better in education sector than bank sector for the working women. Dhas and Karthikeyan (2015) explained that work life balance had the potential to significantly enhance working person's morale, reduce absenteeism, and retain organizational knowledge, particularly in difficult time. Be it Generation X and Y working professionals value more their leisure activities.

Jennifer (2016) studied literature on maternity childcare issues, workplace culture and work-life balance was complementary and interrelated. Sudha (2014) found that women had contributed significantly in corporate world but yet the patriarchal nature of Indian society stopped from having careers that contravene on family work culture. Women now supporting their families with dual incomes and therefore, increased their voice at home. Indian parliament also supporting bill of women 50% reservation as they were contributing to Indian Economy at large. Study also explained that women today, proved themselves as the true 'ardhangini' of their husband's. She was more aware of his world today and she could understand his work pressures. It was widely felt that earning power allowed them to voice their opinions on larger decisions. Such study could be applied in lot of other industries too.

Women Entrepreneurs in India: Dileepkumar (2006) discussed on certain issues faced by entrepreneurial women, like male dominance, a lack of education, required motherly duties, limited mobility, a shortage of finances and lack of achievement motivation. Bulger (2007) studied 332 professionals which were related to boundary management Results showed less flexible and more permeable boundaries were related to more interference, while long working duration expressed high stress that result to insomnia, decreased sleep quality and depression leading to other health issues. Health related risk not only increase a work-family balance issue but also affect entrepreneurial success. Long work hours often leave entrepreneurial women exhausted mentally as well as physically. Mathew (2011) suggested that women entrepreneurs experienced high degree of role overload and associated Work Life Balance issues. Two more important findings were also explained by the study i.e. health issues among female entrepreneurs and work to family conflict as an outcome from the inability to manage time properly.

J. Sudha (2014) shared that to achieve proper work life balance, every working female should fix her objectives and should plan their working properly between career and family. Study also suggested some of the strategies like skill based work, part time work, work from home, and could be used at work and home place for accomplishing a satisfying and fulfilling well balanced life both personally and professionally. It is a need of time that working women were supposed to care the family both physically and financially in order to satisfy the family needs. Also they had to work for the achievement of corporate goals and personal growth to satisfy the career needs. Organizations were also needed to work on human resource planning and policies in order to overcome the issues of the work life balance of women in the current business environment.

Conclusion

Based on the objective, explored the changing trends, of women from ancient times to current times. Lot of changes in attitudes, beliefs and working patterns that have taken places in the life of working women from freedom struggle time to entrepreneurial time. It is important to note that the varying perspectives for women respect, education, empowerment, involvements in all fields, burgeoning women entrepreneurship were independent of the age. Yet the dignified ethical Indian women imbibed with her

the vibes of deep rooted cultural foundation and strong core values as part of inherent personality glorified internationally across the globe the saga of Great Indian civilization

The understanding and the notions of women role in ancient and medieval period was quite different from those of the present world. Ancient India had great respect for women. Women have high positions and roles in society. In Medieval India, invaders had deeply disrupted Indian women image. Modern India is working on shaping back Women's image as educated, intelligentsia, high profile, professionals, corporate, business elegance, in global perspective. Un-doubtable acceptance on women are better managers than male counterparts are growing. The structure of today's society is based on the spirit of democracy and justice. Any kind of discrimination on any ground, including the sexual one, is considered as injustice. The fundamental objectives of Indian system is to beget human suffering, to disseminate the message of perpetual peace in the world, and above all to lead all beings towards serenity, true happiness and liberation from all pains and miseries. Hence Indian women work life started from respect honor to direct indirect involvement in freedom movement to higher education to high profile corporate heading to entrepreneurship finally choosing opt out revolution (a career of choice and comfort with right balance in work and family life). Throughout the journey, Indian women role as first teacher, care taker and home maker will always be greatest in shaping rightly the future generations. This role and responsibility can never be ignored. Else the new generation and society in overall perspective would face severe adversities.

There is also a need of more in-depth studies for Indian working women work life balance problem. This study is just a tip of the iceberg. The issue is a deeper one related to work life balance of working women in India. The few studies that have touched on this issue are also done basically in the western context. Their applicability in the Indian context and especially for women needs to be further explored.

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