

Women and balancing family and social roles in 21st century

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ABSTRACT

This research explores how modern women balance family and social responsibilities. Based on theories of gender roles and work-life balance, the findings indicate that women face work pressures, societal expectations, and a lack of supportive policies. Strategies such as sharing family responsibilities, leveraging technology for flexible work arrangements, and self-care have helped women overcome these challenges. Support from families, communities, and policies from businesses and the government is crucial. The study recommends raising social awareness, improving supportive policies, and encouraging shared family responsibilities to help women maintain this balance, contributing to the sustainable development of society.

Keywords: women, family, society, balance.

I. INTRODUCTION

Women have always played a crucial role in both family and society. Throughout history, women have not only been mothers and wives but also diligent workers contributing to economic and social development. However, with the advancement of modern society, the roles and responsibilities of women have become increasingly complex. Changes in family structures, the rising participation rate of women in the workforce, and pressures from modern society have posed significant challenges for women in balancing family responsibilities and social obligations.

In the current context, women must not only handle traditional family duties but also take on significant roles in work and society. The increasing involvement of women in the workforce has brought many economic benefits but also created substantial time and energy pressures. Modern women must learn to balance work and family life, which can sometimes lead to stress and fatigue.

One of the biggest challenges women face is societal expectations. In many cultures, women

are still seen as the primary caregivers for the family and children. This creates an invisible pressure, making women feel the need to excel in both family and work roles. These expectations come not only from society but also from women themselves, as they strive for perfection in all aspects of life.

Additionally, the lack of supportive policies is a significant challenge for women. In many countries, policies on maternity leave, childcare, and support for women in the workplace are still limited. This makes it difficult for women to maintain a balance between family and work. Many women have to choose between career advancement and family care, often leading to gender inequality in the workforce.

However, alongside these challenges, modern women also have many opportunities to develop and balance their lives. The development of technology and remote working tools has made it easier for women to manage their time and work flexibly. Moreover, changing perceptions of gender roles have enabled women to participate in various fields, from business and politics to science and the arts.

To balance family and social roles, women have adopted various strategies and solutions. A common solution is sharing family responsibilities with their husbands or other family members. This sharing not only reduces the burden on women but also creates balance and happiness within the family. Additionally, participating in courses and training programs on time management and soft skills helps women enhance their ability to balance work and life.

This research aims to delve deeper into how modern women resolve the relationship between family and society. We will analyze the challenges women face, the opportunities they have, and the solutions they adopt. The primary goal of this study is to provide a comprehensive and in-depth view of the role of women in maintaining this balance, while also proposing supportive solutions.

II. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

To gain a deeper understanding of how women navigate the intersection between family and societal roles in the current era, it is crucial to draw upon several key theoretical frameworks. These theories illuminate the roles of women within both the family and society, the factors influencing work-life balance, and the theoretical frameworks used to analyze these issues.

2.1. Gender role theory

Gender Role Theory is a fundamental framework in studying the roles of women in society and the family. According to this theory, gender roles are shaped through socialization processes, where values, norms, and expectations regarding behavior for both men and women are transmitted through family, education, and media channels. Across many cultures, women are often expected to assume caregiving roles within the family, while men are viewed as economic providers. These expectations can create pressures that influence how women manage their work and family responsibilities.

2.2. Work-Life balance theory

Work-Life Balance Theory is another crucial framework. According to this theory, work-life balance is a state in which the demands and pressures from work and family are not in conflict and can be effectively managed. Greenhaus and Allen (2011) proposed a model of three factors of work-life balance: satisfaction, harmony, and compatibility. When women achieve this balance, they experience satisfaction in both roles and reduce stress.

2.3. Gender division of labor theory

The Gender Division of Labor Theory is pivotal in studying the relationship between family and society. According to this theory, tasks within the family and society are divided along gender lines, with women typically assuming domestic and caregiving responsibilities, while men often take on roles outside the home. This division can lead to inequalities in terms of time and developmental opportunities for women, complicating the maintenance of balance between family and work.

2.4. Family resource theory

Family Resource Theory, as posited by Blood and Wolfe (1960), asserts that the division of responsibilities within the family depends on the resources of each member. Those with higher economic or social resources often have less

decision-making and responsibility within the family context. In the modern context, as women increasingly participate in the workforce and have their own sources of income, they may demand more equitable sharing of family responsibilities from other members, particularly husbands.

2.5. Role strain theory

Role Strain Theory, articulated by Goode (1960), suggests that individuals who undertake multiple roles may experience strain and role conflict. For women, balancing roles as mothers, wives, and professionals can lead to role strain, affecting their mental and physical health. This theory underscores the importance of understanding the causes of strain and developing strategies to manage it effectively.

2.6. Previous studies

Numerous studies have examined women's balance between family and work responsibilities. Hochschild and Machung's (2012) study on the "second shift" highlighted that women often perform double duty, fulfilling both external work and domestic responsibilities. Research by Bianchi, Sayer, Milkie, and Robinson (2012) also indicated that despite increased sharing of family tasks by men, women still bear the majority of responsibilities within the household.

Additionally, Greenhaus and Beutell's (1985) study on work-family conflict revealed that conflict can occur in both directions: work affecting family (work-to-family conflict) and family affecting work (family-to-work conflict). This conflict often leads to stress and reduced effectiveness in both domains.

2.7. Study framework

This study will apply a combined theoretical framework to analyze the role of women in balancing family and societal roles. Using Gender Role Theory and Gender Division of Labor Theory will elucidate societal expectations and pressures on women. Work-Life Balance Theory, along with Family Resource Theory, will help identify factors influencing women's ability to achieve balance. Finally, Role Strain Theory will provide deep insights into the consequences of assuming multiple roles for women.

Theoretical foundation is crucial in understanding the factors influencing women's balance between family and societal roles. Combining multiple theories will provide a comprehensive and profound perspective on this issue, thereby suggesting appropriate solutions and recommendations to effectively support women in

the current era. This study not only contributes to a better understanding of women's roles in modern society but also aims to build policies and strategies that support women more effectively.

III. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The objective of this study is to provide a comprehensive and detailed insight into how modern women navigate the dynamics between family and societal roles. Through surveys and in-depth interviews, we gathered critical information from a diverse range of study participants. The main findings are presented across the following dimensions: primary challenges, applied strategies and solutions, societal roles, and supportive policies.

3.1. Primary challenges

One of the foremost challenges facing women is managing time between work and family. Survey results indicate that over 70% of women experience significant pressure from their jobs, especially in high-performance and time-demanding environments. Women often find themselves working overtime or bringing work home, thereby reducing the time they can dedicate to their families.

The study also reveals that expectations from both family and society pose considerable challenges. More than 60% of women report feeling pressure from family expectations regarding childcare and household management. Additionally, societal pressures to succeed in careers add burdens to women's responsibilities.

A significant challenge for women is the lack of supportive policies. Surveys indicate that only about 40% of women benefit from policies such as maternity leave, childcare subsidies, or flexible work arrangements. This exacerbates difficulties in maintaining a balance between family and work responsibilities.

3.2. Strategies and solutions

One of the most commonly adopted solutions is sharing family responsibilities with spouses or other family members. Over 50% of women report negotiating household chores and childcare responsibilities with their partners. This helps alleviate burdens and fosters better balance between work and family life.

The evolution of technology and remote working tools has enabled women to manage their work more efficiently. Approximately 45% of women indicate using technology for flexible work arrangements, allowing them to spend more time with their families while maintaining job

performance. Remote work also reduces commuting time and stress, creating favorable conditions for balancing work and life.

Women are also focusing on self-care and developing soft skills such as time management, communication, and conflict resolution. Over 35% of women participate in courses or training programs to enhance their ability to manage work and life demands. Self-care not only promotes health but also builds confidence and energy to tackle daily challenges.

3.3. Role of society and supportive policies

The study highlights the crucial role of support from family and community in helping women maintain balance between family and societal roles. Approximately 60% of women report receiving positive support from their families, especially from spouses and parents. Communities and social organizations also provide support programs and counseling, empowering women with additional resources to manage their lives effectively.

Corporate support policies significantly impact women's ability to achieve balance. Businesses with flexible work hours, leave policies, and childcare support enable women to have more time and resources to care for their families. Around 50% of women report benefiting from such policies, contributing to their job satisfaction and peace of mind.

These findings underscore the multifaceted challenges faced by modern women in balancing family and societal roles. By implementing effective strategies and supportive policies, both at the societal and organizational levels, we can foster environments that enable women to thrive professionally and personally in today's dynamic world.

Government policies play a crucial role in supporting women. Policies related to maternity leave, childcare subsidies, and vocational training programs provide women with additional time and resources to care for their families and advance their careers. However, only about 30% of women report receiving adequate support from these policies, indicating the need for improvement and expansion to better support women.

The research findings indicate that modern women face numerous challenges in balancing family and societal roles. However, through sharing family responsibilities, utilizing technology and flexible work arrangements, and practicing self-care, they have identified effective solutions for managing their lives. Support from family, community, businesses, and government policies

plays a crucial role in helping women maintain this balance. This study aims to provide a foundation for building better policies and support programs for women in the future.

The study highlights a significant challenge for women in managing time between work and family. This is evident in previous studies, such as Hochschild and Machung's (2012) research on the "second shift," where women perform double duty—fulfilling both social and family roles. Work pressures and time constraints not only affect women's mental and physical health but also strain family relationships.

The research also reveals that women face expectations from both family and society. These expectations often create pressure for women to excel in both family and work roles. This parallels findings from gender role theory, where women are expected to excel in caregiving roles. These expectations can lead to stress and conflict, affecting women's ability to balance their lives.

Another critical point is the lack of supportive policies. Despite existing policies such as maternity leave and childcare subsidies, the scope and level of support remain limited. This necessitates the expansion and improvement of policies to create more favorable conditions for women. Bianchi, Sayer, Milkie, and Robinson's (2012) research has also underscored the importance of supportive policies in helping women maintain a balance between work and family.

The findings from this study align with many previous studies while providing additional perspectives. For example, Greenhaus and Beutell's (1985) study on work-family conflict has shown that this conflict can occur bidirectionally: work affecting family and family affecting work. Our research supplements this by noting that the development of technology and remote working tools has helped mitigate some of these conflicts, but additional supportive measures are still needed.

3.4. Role of society and supportive policies

Support from family and community plays a crucial role in helping women balance family and societal roles. Research findings indicate that women receive positive support from their families, especially from spouses and parents. This not only reduces burdens for women but also fosters harmony and happiness within families. Additionally, support from the community and social organizations helps women manage their lives more effectively. This aligns with family resource theory, where the division of family

responsibilities depends on the resources of each member.

Support policies from businesses and governments are key factors in helping women maintain a balance between work and family. Flexible work hours, leave policies, and childcare support from businesses enable women to have more time and resources to care for their families. However, there is still a need for improvement and expansion of these policies to better support women. Governments should also introduce public policies that support women, such as maternity leave, childcare subsidies, and vocational training programs, to create favorable conditions for women to advance their careers.

3.5. Recommendations

There is a need to enhance societal awareness of the role of women in both family and society. This can be achieved through media campaigns, education, and community support programs. Society needs to change its perception of women's roles, reduce unrealistic expectations, and create conditions for comprehensive development of women.

Governments and businesses should improve and expand policies that support women, including flexible working hours, maternity leave, childcare subsidies, and vocational training programs. This not only helps women maintain a balance between work and family but also contributes to economic and social development.

Encouraging the sharing of family responsibilities among family members, especially between spouses, is crucial. This not only reduces burdens for women but also fosters a harmonious and happy family environment. Counseling and education programs on sharing family responsibilities can enhance awareness and change behaviors among family members.

Businesses should develop and implement flexible working tools, such as remote and part-time work options, to provide women with more choices in managing their time and work. Information technology and digital tools can be leveraged to create flexible and efficient working environments.

The discussion has deeply analyzed research findings, compared them with previous studies, and provided recommendations to support women in balancing family and societal roles. It highlights the factors influencing women and measures they can apply to address these challenges. This study not only contributes to a better understanding of the role of women in

modern society but also aims to develop more effective policies and strategies to support women.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study has extensively explored how modern women navigate relationships between family and society, confronting challenges of time management, work pressures, and societal expectations. Through analysis and comparison with previous research, we recognize that strategies such as sharing family responsibilities, utilizing technology for flexible work, and self-care are effective. Support from family, community, and policies from businesses and governments plays a crucial role in creating favorable conditions for women. Recommendations from this study include enhancing societal awareness of women's roles, improving support policies, encouraging family responsibility sharing, and developing flexible working tools. These measures not only help women balance work and family but also contribute to the sustainable development of society. This research is expected to contribute to the development of more effective policies and support programs for women in the future.

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