

## CHAPTER 4 –

### RESULTS: LIVED REALITIES OF WORK-FAMILY BALANCE OF WOMEN

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The results tell us about the level of women's work-family balance and factors that affect the same, such as the sector of employment, type of family and number of years of work experience. Importantly, the focus is on understanding how the positive spillover between work and family enhances and enriches each other. The demands and responsibilities they hold at workplace and family leads to some negative spillover causing interruptions in both the spheres, which most women manage effectively. The role of women's agency and self-efficacy to navigate the negative spillover between workplace and family and their coping mechanisms to reach towards a balance is highlighted.

#### Level of Women's Work-Family Balance

Figure 4.1 clearly depicts the nature and level of intrusion and enhancement that lead to a specific kind of work-family balance. More than 50% of women reported that they could balance between work and family to a high extent, 44% to a moderate extent and about 5 % to a low extent. The nature of women's work-family balance is determined by the outcomes of the combination of positive as well as negative spillover of work and family as shown in figures 4.1a, b, c and d. These figures explain that women with high work-family balance experience high family to work enhancement (94.2%) than work to family enhancement (85.6%) and 87.5% of women with high work-family balance report low intrusion of family into work and 78.8% report low work into family intrusions. This shows that high work-family balance results from high enhancement-low intrusion. Women with moderate work-family balance report that work enhanced their family more than their families enhancing their work (48.9% and 46.6% respectively). Eighty three percent of women with moderate work-family balance experience intrusion of work into the family than the intrusion of family into work (63.6%). Among those with low work-family balance, almost 44% of women reported that work enhanced their families and for only 22% families enhanced their work because intrusion of family to work is reported to be high as much as 89% compared to work intruding family which is 67%. Thus, this leads to the conclusion that high intrusion and low enhancement of work and family lead to low work-family balance.

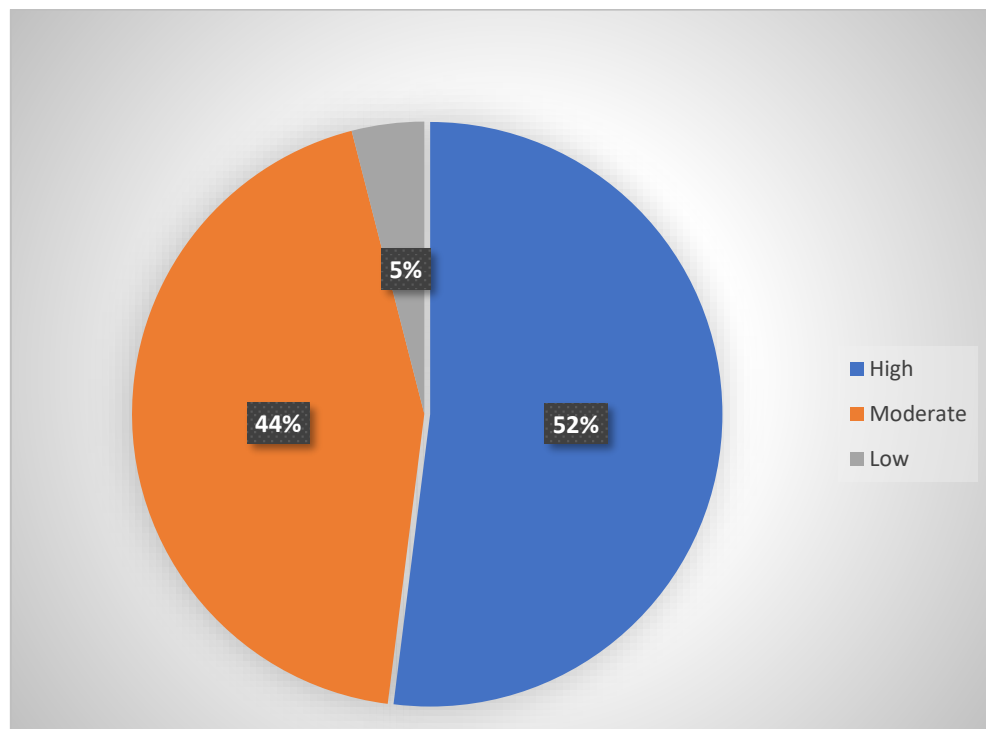


Figure 4.1 Women's level of work-family balance (N=201)

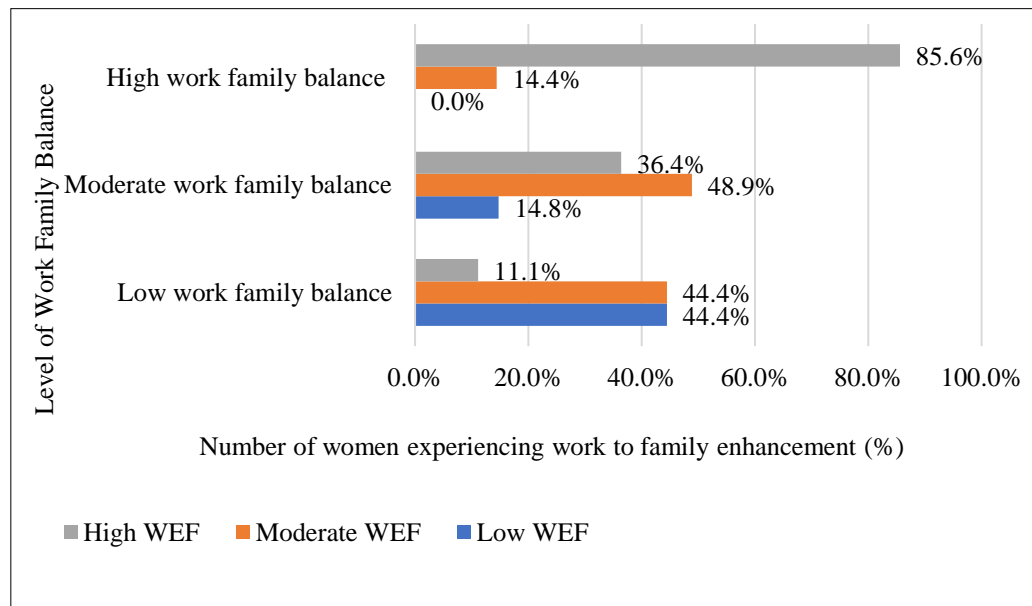


Figure 4.1a. Distribution of women based on the level of work to family enhancement (N=201)

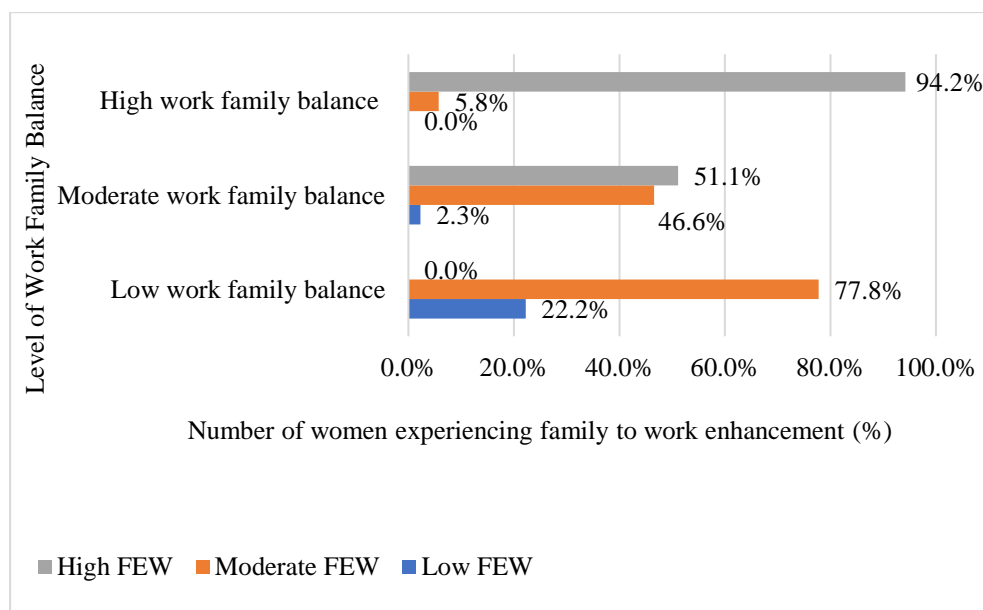


Figure 4.1b. Distribution of women based on the level of family to work enhancement (N=201)

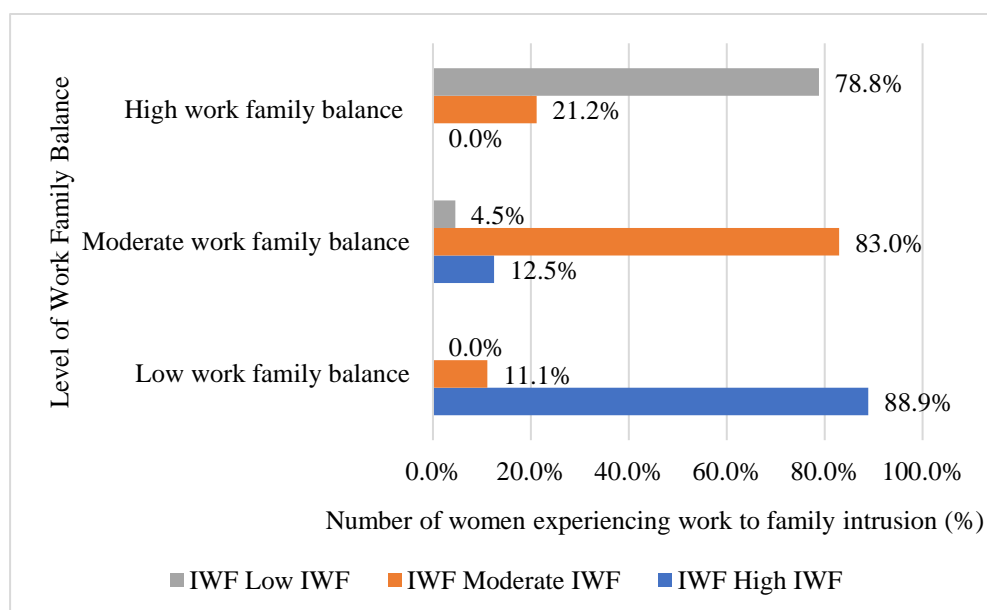
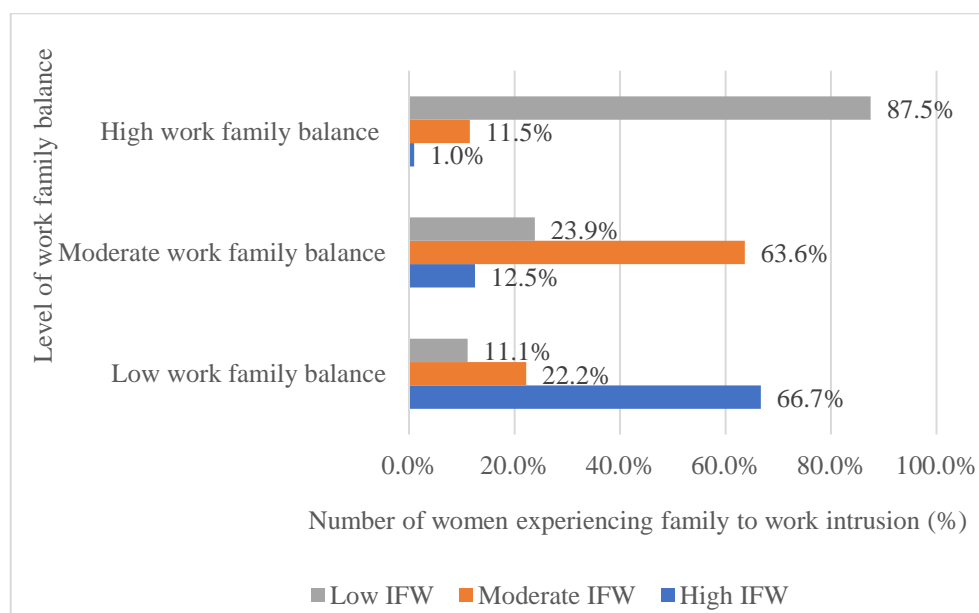


Figure 4.1c. Distribution of women based on the level of work to family intrusion (N=201)



*Figure 4.1d.* Distribution of women based on the level of family to work intrusion (N=201)

These findings corroborate with Frone (2003) where the review highlights work to family conflict to occur more frequently than family to work conflict. This showed that work had a more negative impact on family than family had on work and family had more beneficial impact on work than work benefiting family. This showed that work creates more difficulties for the family than family creating for work. The current study also addresses the issue highlighted by Greenhaus and Parasuraman (1999) to identify the mechanism that integrates work and family. Figure 4.1 clearly reveals the integration of work and family and its outcomes in the form of work-family balance.

A three-way ANOVA was used to identify the differences in the work-family balance of women with reference to the sector of employment, family type and the number of years of work experience. There was no major effect of each of the variables on work-family balance, as seen in table 4.1. The results clearly indicate that there was no statistically significant three-way interaction between Work experience, Sector of employment and Family type ( $p=0.657$  i.e.  $p > .05$ ). This reveals that neither of the demographic variables analysed influence women's work-family balance of women.

Table 4.1

*ANOVA for Understanding Differences Between Sub-Groups (Sectors, Family Type and Number of Years of Work Experience) For Total WFB Scores*

Source	Sum of Squares	Degrees of freedom	F ratio	Significance level (p)
Sector of employment	.533	2	.787	.457
Work experience	.390	2	.576	.563
Family type	.200	1	.592	.443
Sector of employment x work experience	2.376	4	1.755	.140
Sector of employment x family type	1.087	2	1.606	.203
Work experience x family type	1.409	2	2.081	.128
Sector of employment x work experience x family type	.824	4	.608	.657
Error	61.947	183		
Total	1297.000	201		

**Women's Agency-Self-Efficacy and Work-Family Balance** - Women's agency-self efficacy in work, family and for their own self is vital for their work-family balance as it explains to us the shift in the perceptions where men are majorly considered as the decision makers. (Mahalingam & Ramanujam, 2010; Maral & Kumar, 2015). Women were asked to report the level of agency-self efficacy they hold in aspects related to work and family (Refer to annexure number- 3.2 for the agency-self efficacy scale). Almost 3/4<sup>th</sup> of the women reported high agency-efficacy, 18% moderate and 7% reported holding a low agency- self-efficacy.

Pearson correlation was used to study the relationship between work-family balance and women's agency-self-efficacy. Table 4.2 reveals that the Pearson correlation coefficient for self-efficacy and work-family balance is 0.336, which is significant at 0.01 level ( $p < .001$  for a two-tailed test), based on 122 complete observations (i.e., cases with non-missing values for both self-efficacy and WFB). Women's agency self -efficacy and work-family balance have a statistically significant linear relationship ( $p < .001$ ). The direction of the relationship is positive (i.e., self-efficacy and WFB are positively correlated), meaning that these variables tend to increase together (i.e., greater self-efficacy is associated with greater work-family balance).

Table 4.2

*Pearson Correlation between Women's Agency- Self-efficacy and Work-Family Balance*

		Self-efficacy	Work-Family Balance
Self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation	1	.336**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	122	122
Work-Family Balance	Pearson Correlation	.336**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	122	201

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

Figure 4.2 reveals that from the 53% of women with high work-family balance, 85% of women reported having high agency-self-efficacy. It's only 6% of women with high work-family balance that hold low agency-self-efficacy. Among the forty one percent of women with moderate work-family balance, 72% of women reported having high agency- self-efficacy and 24% report to have a moderate agency self-efficacy. It's only 4% of women who report having a low agency self-efficacy. Among the 6% of women with low work-family balance, more than 50% report to have moderate agency self-efficacy and 43% women report to have low agency- self-efficacy. No women with low work-family balance reported having a high agency-self-efficacy.

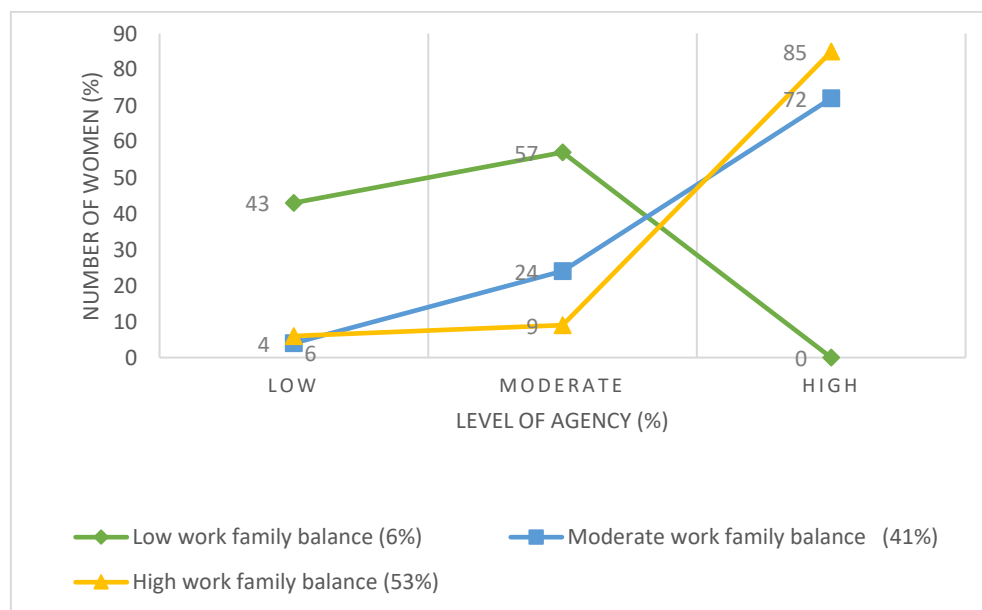


Figure 4.2 Distribution of women based on their level of agency- self-efficacy (N=122)

Figure 4.2 clearly highlights that work-family balance and women's agency self-efficacy act together. If women have higher agency, control in decisions and self-efficacy, they are able to maintain high work-family balance but for women with moderate to low agency self-efficacy exhibit moderate to low work-family balance.

Close to 85 to 90% of women with high work-family balance report that they have the flexibility to schedule their work and delegate domestic work to others within the family or hire domestic help. They can even opt out of child care when they are busy with office work. They report that they can prioritize the demands of work and the demands of family as per need, whereas 70 to 95 percent of women with moderate work-family balance reported this. Close to 90% of women with high work-family-balance report that they have a strong voice in making decisions related to the use of finances in the family and even make decisions related to office activities. They have the privilege to take rest and break from all the work if they need and also decide which needs and requirements to be met or attended first. They could seek support of others to assist them in task completion at the workplace, could travel without any hindrance and even opt out of domestic chores when they are stressed or tired. This was reported by 70 to 80% of women with moderate work-family balance. In the case of women with low agency- self-efficacy 28.6 % adhere to traditional norms. They are not able to seek support from family members for childcare or domestic chores compared to women with high and moderate work-family balance. They also report that they do not have the privilege to take leave from work to attend to family emergency. They do not have the scope to spare time for the activities that make them feel happy. They have a very limited scope to prioritize demands of work or family as per their need and delegate responsibilities in the family or at the workplace.

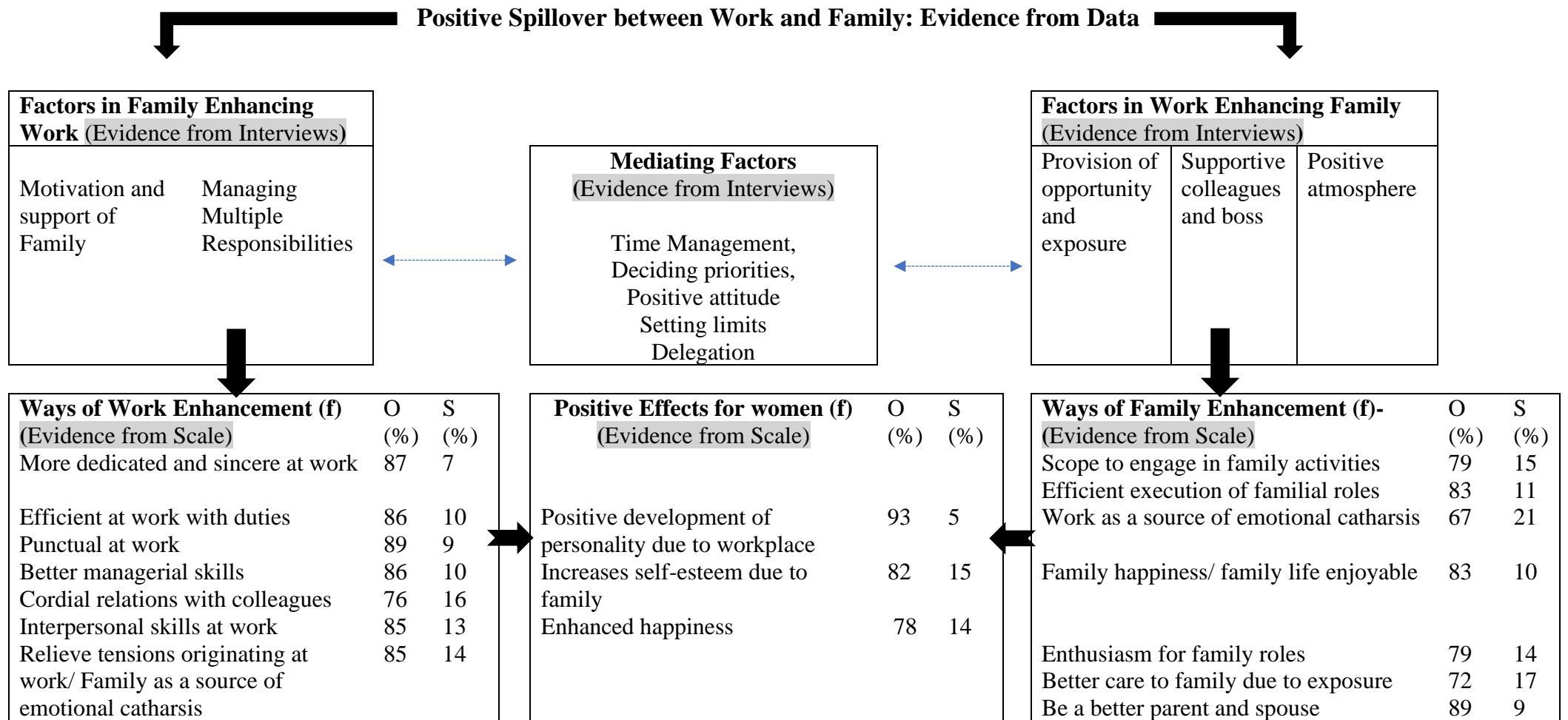
Therefore, to capture the variations in the experiences of employed women about their work-family balance the 'What' and 'How' of it were identified and elaborated i.e. What factors in work and family lead to either negative or positive spillover? What are the effects of negative and positive spillover on women, work and family? How women cope or navigate negative spillover? Women's experiences are detailed out in phase two of the study and the underlying explanations for women's different level of work-family balance are provided.

### **Positive Spillover of Work and Family: Women's Experiences**

The current study presents positive spillover of work and family in the beginning due to the presence of evidences in literature that support the fact that most women are now able to

balance between their work and family thus shifting the perspective from that of segmentation between work and family to integration of the two leading to mutual enhancement, enrichment, and facilitation (Abboud, 2015). Secondly, it is now important to move beyond the longstanding negative perspective for the interaction between work and family i.e. work-family conflict.

Table 4.3 provides a glimpse to the evidence that emerged from interview data i.e. the factors that facilitate, enrich experiences of women from work to family and family to work. It also explains the ways and the extent to which women's self; their work and family get enhanced by each other.

Table 4. 3 - *Positive Spillover of Work and Family and Its Effects on Work, Family and Women*

Note- (O =Often, S=Sometimes)

### **Family Enhancing Work**

Almost all women interviewed reported that their families supported them in all the given situations, with very few imposing stereotyped expectations of her to be the exclusive caregiver within the family. Most women also shared that feelings of cooperation and understanding among the family members were experienced more often than being compelled to fulfil the familial responsibilities or activities. Such an attitude combined with women's schedule were the two prominent elements facilitating their work-family balance. Family inculcates in women the essential skills that women make use of at their workplace and brings about efficiency in their work performance. (Refer to Table 4.3)

Eighty-six percent women feel that their family often gives them the energy and better mood to perform the duties at the workplace, but for 10% of women, this happens only sometimes. Further, 89 % of women felt that the taking of responsibilities within the family often imbibed in them an attitude towards punctuality that got reflected also in their work setting. Similarly, 87% of women experience that family life often makes them more dedicated and sincere at work. The supportive nature of family members helped them relieve the tensions originating at work in most cases (85%) but for the rest (14%) it was not the case. Illustrating from the interview manuscripts women staying with in-laws mentioned that their in-laws were supportive, cooperative, and adjusted to their work schedules. They even helped them with childcare when they (women) were at work. The in-laws of some women motivated them to pursue a career though with a few terms and conditions, but the fact that they motivated and supported them was appreciated by women, as seen in a freelancer's expression in box- 4.1-

Women also shared that cooperation from children was also an important factor that facilitated their balance process. Mothers explained to children about their schedules and children in-turn cooperated with them which women feel was a great relief and support, as illustrated in box -4.1 by a JRF working in the university. Women with teenage or older children also mentioned that they received support from their children in domestic chores or any outside work.

Almost 3/4<sup>th</sup> women interviewed mentioned that they had support from their husbands which was an asset for them because husbands helped them with childcare, elderly care in case of in-laws staying together and in domestic chores. They also shared their feelings and thoughts only with their husbands due to close emotional bonding with them; they, in turn,

received the needed support and guidance related to matters in the family as well as workplace as seen in the response of the dental surgeon (Box 4.1).

In the case of 76 % of women, often the interactions in their family makes their relationship with their colleagues and supervisors more cordial and develop their interpersonal skills at workplace (85%). Box 4.1 illustrates this in the response of a teacher whose husband supported her in learning interpersonal skills. 86% of women often feel that the experience of managing family provides them with better skills at work. As reported by a teacher -

*Time planning at work is like we plan at home, that in this much time we should be able to complete these many things. Similarly, at work, we prepare the timeline that within these many number of days these number of chapters have to be completed and keep time to help children with revision.*

Women interviewed discussed that family acts as a source of emotional catharsis for them as they could share their feelings or dilemma related to work, their daily work experience. Family members, in turn, provide them with the needed emotional and moral support to deal with the situations, thus enhancing their work.

**Box-4.1: How My Family Enhanced My Work: Women's Expressions**

**Motivation and support from Family** *"None in my in-law's place is as educated as me, and their ethos does not permit women to work outside home. In spite of this, my father-in-law always supported and motivated me to work, as he feels that as I am well educated, I should work. This moved me forward and such support from the family is very very important. Now I feel good and nice, happy. I went for a one-week trip with my husband, I didn't take him (child), he stayed with his grandparents. I am working since he (child) was 6 months, so he is more attached to grandmother than me"* – (Freelancer with high WFB).

A JRF in university feels that support from her parents and an entire positive ecosystem enhances her life. *- I am not even worried about my son because I know he is in school and is in good hands, so I need not worry about that. Then after school he goes to my Mumma's place and as mom is there, I don't worry much about it and that is how I am able to manage and that is a great support to me. I have also trained him in that manner. Once I went to Calcutta for a conference when he was 2 years old. It was a 5-day conference and a 10 days tour. So, it was not a big problem he stayed back. The other thing is that I joined my PhD since he was 3 months old, so from that time onwards though I was not in college for these many hours but he was well acquainted with my timings. He knows about the timings I won't be around, so things get integrated well".*

**Supportive Husband** - A dental surgeon narrates – *"If you just consider my husband, he always wanted me to work. He never thought of me not working. So that's a great support you have. He supports me in everything, even at home like he takes care of kids if I am not around. Its only cooking that I do and I have a maid for all other household chores. I have been working full time till the last date of my deliveries and since my kids were 21 days old. It's nothing like I took a break from my work. So, I have always been able to manage and everything gets balanced."* A senior medical officer in a private firm adds- *Yes, he is supportive, whenever need arises he helps, including kitchen work, cleaning and picking up my daughter from Daycare. This enables me to attend to duties and emerging demands of private sector at work and also attending meetings.*

Husbands' support comes even in the form of helping their wives with insights and skills (facilitation of the professional role). A teacher reports husband's contribution to interpersonal skills –

*"I used to take tuitions earlier, where sometimes I did experience problems with parents of children. I used to discuss with my husband and I have a habit to share everything with my him. I seek his consent and guidance for my work and if I don't seek that consent and guidance, I don't feel satisfied because I feel he is the right person to guide me and even help me find solutions to the problem. And the guidance he gives me, helps me at my work as he suggests me the ways to handle the situations. Another teacher from government sector coordinates schedule with her husband enabling her to be efficient at work and also improve her skills. She says- "Me and her father coordinate our schedules. Her father does business from home, so till the time he is at home he takes care of her. He even changes her clothes, then she sleeps. By that time, I come home. I see to it that I don't sleep in the afternoon. I also think if I make her study in the afternoon, she would be free in the evening and then I can do my office work in the evening that I bring home. It also gives me time to read and enhance my vocabulary."*

These results corroborate with findings of earlier studies in Bangladesh (Tasnim, Hossain, & Enam, 2017) where 47.5% of women said that they receive enough support to maintain both professional and personal life. In the study by Rendon (2016) on women involved in social work found that husbands and support of child's grandparents were the key factors in facilitating their balance. Santhi & Sundar (2012) found that the presence of elders in the family makes women employees comfortable at work and contribute to their maximum efficiency.

Crozier & Lalande (2000) in their study undertaken in Canadian Universities (Nova Scotia and Calgary) found that husbands, boyfriends, parents were great in terms of physical and emotional support and influenced their career decisions and enabled them to fulfil these by providing advice. The support and approval of these significant others allowed her to pursue her own dreams and eventually contributed to the balancing of giving to herself and others. Another study in Canada, Mexico and Argentina (Lirio, et al., 2007) revealed that family support and social support is important. Husbands and parents in Canada acted as providers of emotional support and informational support. They also acted as mentors, provided advice and influenced as role models in women's career plans. In Mexico, husbands and fathers played an important role through their approval and support. On similar lines, the findings of Ahmad (2012) in Lahore, Pakistan showed that male support is very necessary for working women and many had strong emotional support.

### **Work Enhancing Family**

All women mentioned that they enjoyed the status of being an employed woman and that their work enhanced their personal, family and professional life. They detailed out the aspects of the workplace that enriched their family life. Almost 89% of women feel that often the experience they gained at work helped them become a better parent/spouse, which reflects the positive spillover through enrichment. Four fifths of women feel that their work schedule often helps them to plan and execute their family activities regularly which includes childcare, elderly care, household chores and sparing time for spouse, which points out the scope for integration between work and family. The work culture and their punctuality at work that helps them perform their personal/family role properly, as expressed by 83%. A freelancer pathologist narrates -

*I have restricted my timings and I am very clear that I don't want to work for more than 5 hours and that's the reason I am able to spend more time with my children. Many things other than the household chores need to be managed but I am able to*

*manage. My husband visits us occasionally as he works abroad so when he is around, we spend time together so that's not an issue as well.*

Aryee, Srinivas, & Tan (2005) found that women's involvement in their job was due to their intrinsic motivation to invest time and efforts in their job. Greenhaus & Parasuraman, (1999) and Grzywacz & Marks (2000) state that intrinsic motivation to be related to work-family facilitation enhanced their work performance and resulted into positive moods and the positive moods get carried back to family creating a conducive environment. This is noticeable in the current study when women feel good about their work, they carry back fewer frustrations and agitations and this enriches their family experiences.

Seventy-two percent women feel that the exposure and interactions at work often helps them to provide proper care to their dependents, and also guide them rightly that reflects transfer of skills from one sphere to another. A senior medical officer shared-

*Being a working woman inculcates in us the communication skills and the ways to respond to others. When home, we communicate with our children in a particular manner and develop a sense of discipline too. We can sense the difference in children of working women and those not employed. They shout, misbehave and one feels no discipline in the house which makes me feel uncomfortable.*

Women clearly stated that that work is often able to provide them with the opportunities to get rid of the tensions arising from the personal/family life (67%), and provides them with the enthusiasm and happiness to pursue their personal/family roles (79%) indicating benefits in emotional status. A school teacher reports-

*Though at my workplace I am not at a higher post, I get all the respect and whatever be the event my name is always included without asking by default and if I am not available, they miss me. That's the reason I am not leaving this job as I have now adjusted with my job timings, family and everything, I do get better opportunities but I don't feel like leaving it. The workplace is also very nearby so that's a plus point.*

These findings can also be validated with the study Kumar, Murthy, & Chaitra (2016) had done with the managerial level employees in Bosch Ltd, Bangalore where the organization provided its employees and their families an opportunity to participate in the company's celebrations or other activities. The consideration of the involvement of the family in events organized at work makes the employees dedicated and sincere towards the organization which in turn provides a boost to the company.

Most women (83%) often experience an enjoyable personal/family life due to the positive nature of their work environment. Many women found their workplace to be

enjoyable like in the case of women working in corporate sectors mentioned that there was no compulsion to take the backlog home, they could complete the work and leave for their homes which provides a scope to spare time for their families which otherwise gets difficult. Similarly, self-employed women reported that as they have support from their co-workers or because they have fixed their work hours, it helps them spare time for their families. A self-employed dealer in milk and milk products reports-

*I have fixed my work timings and hardly has it happened that I get late, so as such I do not experience problems at home due to the job. It is up to me whether to leave for home or complete the pending work. I leave by my timings and also pick up my mother in law.* This is indicating the role of work schedule in achieving balance

Another aspect mentioned by almost all women was stability in job with no transfer. A teaching assistant in the university reports-

*Mine is a very stable job and there are no transfers in it. I like this job I really enjoy what I do. When I get a vacation, we (daughter and me) visit her grandparents in Surat. So, we maintain a great family bonding*

The support and cooperation from colleagues and bosses was an important feature reported by women, especially in the time of emergencies. Box. 4.2 illustrates a few responses of women.

These results are in alignment with various studies in the past that communicate the importance of a supportive work environment, the understanding and cooperative temperaments of supervisors and colleagues towards enriching/facilitating women's balance. The support at workplace enables them to execute their familial roles efficiently (Doble & Supriya, 2010; Kumar, Murthy, & Chaitra, 2016; Manfredi & Holliday, 2004; Tasnim, Hossain, & Enam, 2017). In addition, a study in Vancouver by Warren & Johnson (1995), studied how such an environment reduces work and family role strain. Olubunmi & Ibukunoluwa (2012) a study from 3 states in Nigeria - Southwest Nigeria Lagos, Ogun and Oyo reveal that work-life balance was significantly better for women who had supportive bosses than those with non-supportive bosses.

#### Box-4.2: How Supportive Boss and Colleagues Facilitated My Familial Roles: Women's Expressions

*Yes, I am able to spend time with my family. I don't leave kids behind, **they are with me at the clinic**. My staff takes care of them when I am busy with patients. I think after a particular age your kids also don't need you to be around them every time. They want their space. So I try to give them the space as well as make time for them. We plan family vacations too, so I am able to give time to my children and husband. (A dentist self employed with high work-family balance ).*

A Preschool owner also feels that-

*If I have an emergency at home my **office staff supports me and manages** everything at the preschool on their own if I am not around, so that I can attend to the family emergency. Its now after years of experience that feel things are getting manageable and settled (Preschool owner, Low work-family balance).*

***My colleagues and boss are supportive** and they understand if I have emergencies at home to attend, or if it is related to my son. If my son is not well and I need to leave, the head of the department allows me to leave so they understand. About my colleagues, we all like buddies, so that's not a problem. We make adjustments with each other and we are comfortable with it. ( JRF in University, Government sector).*

*Ma'am called me to offer a job in her school. I was in a dilemma to choose because it demanded to manage everything at work and I had to manage home as well. But it was the support and motivation of my teacher that I joined this job. She helped me by **providing flexible work timings**, so things gets managed well at work and family. (School coordinator)*

Women interviewed mentioned about the maternity leave which helped them execute their parental role efficiently.

A Teaching Assistant in The University Reports- *I would say, after my daughter was born, I enjoyed full 135 days of maternity leave that we get from the university. I got hospitalized on the day of the delivery of my daughter, otherwise I didn't take even a single holiday. As we have a bit of flexibility at work and our head is also cooperative, I am able return home early and spend time with my daughter. When I come home my daughter and me, we both have food together, we play, we go for a short walk in the society. During vacation we (daughter and me) go to Surat to spend time with our family there ( in-laws' family), so that she also is also in touch with her paternal grandparents. My husband visits us on weekends, so on that day I come home early from work, so that we can spend time together. So this way I am very happy with my job and I am able to give my best to them.*

A deputy HR in private firm reports - *The company provided me all the maternity benefits and even if I am ill, I get leave for it. On weekends I have holidays, so I spend the weekend with my daughter and family. An insurance desk operator and clerk in government offices share- Whenever I need leave from work, I am able to take. I generally take leaves for my son's examination or when he is sick or when he has vacations in school. I get public holidays, medical leave, paid leave and casual leave, so there is no problem from the work side. This allows me to be able to take care of my kids as well as spend time with them. My work does not hinder my family so this way I am available to my family.*

These results are in line with several studies conducted in different locations such as Doble & Supriya, 2010 in Chennai (India); Gani & Ara, 2010 in Kashmir (India), Bayazit & Bayazit, 2017 (Istanbul); Rajadhyaksha, et al., 2018 in 10 countries Australia, Canada, China, India, Indonesia, Israel, Spain, Taiwan, Turkey and the United States that reveal that provision of childcare arrangements at the workplace or near their workplace/homes could be of help to women to meet with the childcare demands and which could further boost their work-family balance. Crozier & Lalande (2000) and Santhi & Sundar (2012) in Chennai found that flexibility at a job and making childcare arrangements available to be an important factor for their work-family balance. Provision of flexible work schedule, telework, the option to work from home when needed, reduced working hours, alternate working hours were reported as the factors that could help them spare time for their families without absenteeism at work and reduced physical and mental stress and in turn, enhance their work-family balance.

The responses of women in the study clearly highlight that the majority of women feel happy and satisfied with their lives and that their personality is enhanced due to their work. Close to 93% of women reported that they became confident due to their work, they developed a strong personality that could deal with the odds at their workplace. The workplace requires interaction and dealing with several kinds of people at work, so they also developed the confidence to deal with them. Talking about their self-esteem, most women (82%) mentioned that the supportive nature of their families enhanced their self-esteem at work. Women's expressions are highlighted in box 4.3. Kalliath, Kalliath, Chan, & Chan (2018) in their study in Nagpur found family and work enrichment, job wellbeing and job satisfaction to be related to each other because social workers who experience work-family enrichment also reported having wellbeing in the job. They also reported to be satisfied with their jobs and that they received higher levels of family support. Wayne, Randel, & Stevens (2006) assessed the relationship of individual, family and organizational benefits to work-family and family-work enrichment. It was found that individual identity and the informal or emotional support within the domain was associated with greater enrichment for the employees from a major insurance company.

Women with high and moderate work-family balance expressed that work and family are parallel paths that need attention and if the family is supportive, it definitely helps or facilitates work and similarly if work is supportive, family gets enhanced in several ways as shown in Figure 4.1. This is also evident in the way's women navigate their paths, reporting

that their positive attitude, their skills of managing time, prioritizing as per the need, setting limits for self and the way of delegating responsibilities facilitated the management of demands of work and family. Therefore, the positive spillover is advantageous for women's work, family and their own self.

Tang (2009) found that mastery in managing to be a moderator between role experience and psychological health. In general, a higher level of mastery augmented positive effect and reduced negative influence of role experience on psychological functioning.

However, one cannot assume that there exists a state of life free of stresses, conflict or turbulence, only its intensity varies. Women do experience difficulties in the management of demands and expectations. The inability to meet up with the expectations of work due to lack of resources, support or personal incapability leads to negative spillover, that hinders achieving a positive balance between work and family. The next section focuses on understanding this side of the coin in a detailed manner based on women's own experiences.

**Box-4.3 How Positive Spillover of Work and Family Enhances Women's Self**

*I started working when I was in school and till date, I am working, of course, the work position has changed now. I take up the job which I enjoy. In terms of professional development, being employed increases my knowledge enhances my interpersonal skills as in how to interact and converse with others at work as well as my presentations skills. The nature of job here, I enjoy it. It has helped me grow as a person over the years. You can say working with people is my passion, so I am enjoying it here. My work has contributed professionally as well as to my personal development. (A deputy HR manager in a private firm)*

*Of course, when you are working you have a social circle which makes you feel happy for your work, here it's a different class so obviously you get a different comfort which you can't get in the society. So, in that way it gives me satisfaction. I don't have any financial need or any financial problem, I am working because I am educated and I want to give back to society. I am highly educated and with this degree, if I sit home it's of no point and I feel guilty. Of course, my job gives me a persona. (A freelancer pathologist)*

*A government desk officer- I regularly perform yoga for an hour. I always spare time for myself because only if I keep well, I can take care of others. I work because when we can make a friendly group, we learn many things. I feel good when I go for work when someone calls you mam, I feel good, it's a respectable job. The nature of job helps me manage by family too, I can avail other facilities like holidays. We also become aware of current fashion and how to dress up lifestyle. There is a change now like earlier I was very simple but now I try to learn and adapt. I have become more confident now because I can make out what kind of people there are and accordingly how do I have to live I learn that.*

*A dentist Professional - Yes definitely when I started working, I was not very confident but now I am. I think the profession does make a lot of difference. There is a lot of change in my personality due to my profession.*

*A private school teacher- Multitasking has helped me enhance my personality. Along with this, I meet a lot of people and socialize with them because I learn many things from them. My daughter considers me as her model and I feel fortunate for it. I always tell her to take my good qualities/skills and not the bad qualities. I cherish every moment and live happily.*

*A freelancer in Physics research - To work is my necessity because work is like food for my brain. If I don't work my brain stops functioning. I try to help others by making the best use of my skills and knowledge. Work gives me much-needed happiness, mental peace, appreciation for self and satisfaction in life.*

**Negative Spillover between Work and Family and its Effects**

Negative spillover is defined as the transfer of bad moods, low energy, and fatigue arising from the work environment to family or the phenomenon of family problems interfering with work productivity (Brett et al., 1992; Friedman & Galinsky, 1992; Ironson, 1992) as cited in

(Grosswald, 2003). Abboud (2015) stated that overload and conflicts are outcomes of elevated demands in work and family and these conflicts could be time-based (time constraints to meet the expectations), strain based (fatigue, tiredness) or behaviour based (stubborn behaviour to caring behaviour). Women who experience negative spillover of work and family juggle to manage between the two. The situations or the circumstances of family and its effects on work; the workplace situations and its effect on families and the overall effects of these on women are now elaborated and summarized in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4. – *Negative Spillover of Work and Family and Its Effects*

What in family intrudes workplace	O %	S %	<div><div></div><div>Negative spillover</div><div></div></div>			What in Workplace Intrudes Family?	O%	S %
<i>(Evidence from scale)</i>						<i>Evidence from scale</i>		
Role Overload	9	28	<div><div>Personal Factors</div><div>Unable to manage tasks and time</div><div>Feeling compelled to execute responsibilities</div></div>	<div><div>O%</div><div>13</div><div>S%</div><div>47</div></div>	Work timings and hectic schedule-	11	23	
Care Responsibilities and Issues	15	39			Non-supportive boss and colleagues	9	16	
Societal expectations and activities	4	13						
<i>Evidence from Interviews</i>					<i>Evidence from Interviews</i>			
Increase expectations from In-laws, Husband and Children. Conflicting ideologies, non-supportive family members			Negativity in the environment due to limited opportunities, no flexibility, gender discrimination, lack of facilities, communication and appreciation					
<div></div>			<div></div>					
Negative effects on Work	O %	S %	Negative effects on Women			Negative effects on Family	O%	S%
<i>(Evidence from scale &amp; substantiated in interviews)</i>						<i>(Evidence from scale &amp; substantiated in interviews)</i>		
Lack of concentration	33	43	Physically tired	19	53	Lack of attention to children	12	29
Inefficient work	4	10	Mentally Stressed	20	57	Lack of attention to parents & in-laws	13	46
Delays/ postponement in work	5	25	Lack of sleep	17	24	Lack of attention to spouse	4	15
			Health issues	10	26	Unable to fulfil demands and responsibilities	33	84
			Unsatisfactory personal life	18	43	Diminished family happiness	9	19
						Missing social functions	17	27

Note: O=Often, S=Sometimes

### **Family Dynamics That Affect Work Negatively**

The former UN special rapporteur defined unpaid work as domestic work that included preparation of meals, cleaning, washing clothes, water and fuel collection, and direct care of people that included children, older persons, persons with disabilities as well as able-bodied adults with no financial remuneration (Levtov.et.al, 2015). Under several circumstances, even middle-class professional women experience difficulties to fulfil these care responsibilities and this when get carried over to work, affect work negatively.

Seventeen percent women had children aged 3-6 years and 18% had children aged 12-15 years. Women with children aged 9-15 years shared that the changing and additional responsibilities with the increasing age of children was an added pressure for them. A teacher from private school reports-

*“I feel due to age I get tired mentally and physically, and my elder son is also growing so he has also become demanding. Everything is so fussy and segregated I feel sometimes and no one in the family wants to adjust. In these circumstances, I am not able to perform well at my work and I start feeling guilty that I am a working woman.”*

**Childcare** formed a vital component in various deliverables of women in the family.

Children expected their mothers to spare and spend time with them in any possible way and on any possible day. Twelve women reported difficulty to manage and meet the various needs and demands of child(ren) due to lack of support from their family and the absence of any other arrangement (refer Table 4.5). They often experienced clashes in timings of their job with their children's school timings but failed to receive any support from their workplace or family. The non-support and non-cooperation of children with mother's schedule led to disappointments and disagreements between mother and children. Almost all women were most concerned about the security of their children when they were at work and unavailable to children. The responses of mothers related to childcare are exemplified in table 4.5.

Two women in the current study had no kids but were burdened by domestic chores, in-laws' expectations, non-compatible husband's work timings and their work pressure; not ignoring the fact that whether living in a nuclear family or household with adults, child's responsibility largely falls on the shoulders of women which is also evident in the current study where lack of support for childcare distresses women and makes them feel burdened.

Table 4.5

*Women's Responsibility Towards Children and The Difficulties at Work*

Nature of Involvement	Women's Expressions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School homework</li> <li>• Pick and drop to school/coaching classes</li> <li>• Attend PTA meetings</li> <li>• Be a support to children for participation in extracurricular</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Education</p> <p><b>Late arrival to work-</b> A deputy HR manager in a private firm- <i>"The only problem I face is managing time and responsibilities because eight hours of job is compulsory and on the other hand, I have a child who demands time too. In case my husband is not in town I need to drop my child to the school and then leave for my office which is very hectic because my office is very far. Sometimes daughter also gets cranky due to which I get late for my office as well."</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life skills</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Socialisation</p> <p><b>Inefficient work-</b> A freelancer reports- <i>I am not able to give proper time and attention to my work due to my daughter because she keeps the house very dirty. I have scolded her so many times that now she takes me for granted and does not listen to me too. I need to run behind her and get the things done which is very tiring and my health as such does not remain good. It's too difficult to manage her and everything."</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daycare</li> <li>• Workplace</li> <li>• Parents</li> <li>• In-laws</li> <li>• Neighbours.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Care arrangements</p> <p><b>Lack of concentration-</b> A teacher in private school- <i>When my daughter is alone, I experience a lot of problems because I don't even have any relatives hers in the city. I need to keep her with me at work. I have to negotiate with the bosses to allow/permit my daughter to be in school so that she is cared for but not always it is successful. My husband is not always supportive towards daughter, so it's me who has to manage everything which really becomes difficult and frustrating at times. Then I am unable to concentrate on my work, cannot work efficiently and then I have to postpone the things so that my daughter is cared for.</i></p>
<p>Play Read books Narrate stories Visit amusement parks Involve the child in cooking and other household chores Cook various dishes</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Spend time for activities</p> <p><b>Postponed work-</b> A teacher in a government school- <i>At times when my daughter starts nagging and on the other hand I have a lot of work to do, but she doesn't allow me to work. At that point of time, I feel irritated because I want to finish my work but it keeps dragging. The head asks us to complete things on time but I am not able to do it. Even if I have holidays, I postpone it till tomorrow and still not able to complete it. Then holidays also just pass and I am not able to complete my work due to my daughter or some or the other reason. She keeps nagging, she would ask for 100 % attention every time. So, at that time I really feel that she is making my life hell.</i></p> <p><b>Physical tiredness-</b> <i>"It is occasional that children help me because they are studying and then tell me to rest too. They also tell me to not complain about tiredness because it's me who chose to work as well as study and it is me who has chosen this life of struggle. So, I often feel very tired to complete all the chores, study and even prepare for work the next day."</i> A desk officer from government office.</p>

The **negative attitude of in-laws** towards women's job and especially her job timings hindered their work. Almost nine women reported that their in-laws did not like their 9 am to 5 pm job as it required them to be away from home for a longer number of hours. The increased demands and expectations of in-laws, the lack of support from in-laws and their negative attitudes created difficulties for women as almost all women staying with their in-laws or separate from them mentioned that their in-laws placed high expectations on them. They expected them to spend time with them, care for them, and visit them if staying separate from them. The in-laws of a few participants had a belief that women's primary role is to care for the family and that her paid work could be secondary. In-laws often got annoyed when their expectations were not fulfilled or domestic chores were incomplete. A teacher from private school reports-

*My in-laws used to get annoyed due to my job timings. They are conservative sort of, they want things to be done on time like lunch should be ready by 1:30 pm and dinner too. Of course, we do work according to the clock but still, it is much more than what they expect for us- which is spontaneity."*

A third of women stated that their in-laws interfered in their ways of functioning and always dictated the terms. Another 40 % feel that it is their responsibility and duty to take care of in-laws no matter what the case, maybe often leading to guilt and unhappiness about not being an ideal family woman.

Three women reported that their in-laws permitted them to work but placed various terms and conditions for them. One of the conditions was related to the selection of nature of occupation or workplace such that the number of working hours are less, does not include travel, does not demand to stay back at the workplace. They were clearly told by their in-laws to fulfil family responsibilities and not compromise due to their work. This makes women feel less privileged in terms of freedom to choose the occupation of their choice and felt compelled to fulfil their family responsibilities, especially towards in-laws to be able to continue with their job. The responses of women related to their in-law's expectations and its effects on their work is exemplified in figure 4.3.

<p><b>Limited scope of progress in work-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“You are compelled to adjust according to family mindset and culture like my in-laws do not allow me to go out after 7 pm for work. I can go out with my husband after 7 pm but not for my job. The day I opted to work I was told this thing, that is why I had to leave my NGO’s job because over there I used to come home by 9 pm.”</i></li> <li>• Few women had an opportunity to travel in their jobs, but they restricted their movements because they did not have any other child care arrangement. Some women even denied taking additional responsibilities or higher posts at workplace as they knew they won’t be able to fulfill it due to their family responsibilities and commitments. Few women mentioned that they chose their current occupation after analyzing its compatibility to their schedule and that enabled them to manage everything otherwise would have opted for a different occupation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Interference in work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“With in-laws there was a lot of disturbance and I really didn’t enjoy my work there. They would always insist to complete the household work first and then I do my work. Sometimes I do feel that they are interfering like when I make jewellery my mother in law would often interfere and say it’s not looking good; the combination is not good. At that moment I feel why she needs to comment, and I don’t like third party view so I feel that if she gives feedback when asked it would be preferred but not always and every day. I know how things are, I know my customers, I know their choice, what they want, I know. Mother in-law can only suggest color combination, but it is me who deals with the customers, so I know about it. When I need to meet client, in-laws would start questioning about it. Sometimes when clients come home to see materials, my in-laws would always dislike it and get annoyed.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Delayed work-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“My in-laws would complain to my husband that would she always do these exhibitions? When would she do the household work? It kicked me that time that domestic chores would be done anyhow, but right now it’s my age to earn and I can earn more, but my in-laws have a belief that daughter in law should first complete the domestic chores, manage everything and then worry about the paid work. Due to these conflicts many times i am not able to complete my project on time.”</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Lack of concentration in work-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I constantly keep thinking about my family responsibilities and its consequences if not fulfilled. I worry that my mother in law would be annoyed as I was not able to complete many household chores and this guilt of inability to fulfil in-laws expectation 100% makes it difficult for me to concentrate in work.</i></li> </ul>

Figure 4.3 How in-law’s expectations interfere with women’s work?

All women stated the **relationship with their husband** to be the most important component of their life as support from husband acts as a facilitator for balance. Nearly fifty percent of women interviewed stated that their husbands demanded time and attention but most of them were unable to spare time. However, five women mentioned that their husbands did not

understand their situation and made them feel that they are being ignored. These women were then not able to devote more time to their workplace and had to return home early due to the non-cooperative and non-adjusting attitude of their husbands.

***Distressed relation with husband-*** He is like typical Indian husband like he supports at times and not the other time. Husband was nowhere, he tells me that either stay here and face the situation or go back to in-laws place so I try to leave the office on time so that I can complete the household chores and other responsibilities. He is allowing me to work on the condition that I am able to manage both the things. I don't earn much but I have to earn to support the family.

***My husband's job timings and my job timings are contradictory.*** By the the time I come home he leaves for his job and we hardly get time together. He then expects me to take leave from workplace which I did but then I stopped because it creates a negative image at workplace for me.

The findings corroborate the study (Singh, Ahluwalia, & Sriram, 2019 and Sriram, 2019a,b,c), which found that involvement of men in caregiving roles and domestic roles increased over the period of time and facilitated women's employment. However, the level of men's involvement in caregiving and domestic roles continue to be less compared to women. It is important to leave behind the traditional role expectations from men to be an economic provider and give them an opportunity and space to be a part of caregiving and domestic activities. The workplace policies can also be blamed for not being an active agent in providing paternal leaves for fathers. Providing fathers with paternal leave would be a step towards helping fathers be involved with their children to promote their well being and gender equality in home workplace and society as a whole.

All women reported about the completion of domestic chores as a part of their daily routine that included cooking, cleaning, doing the dishes, purchase of grocery, etc. Seven women did not hire help for domestic chores as they felt that the time of their hired help and their jobs clashed with each other and few preferred to work on their own. Lack of support from family for domestic chores, childcare create a feeling of overload. Seven women reported their in-laws to be completely non-supportive, non-adjusting and had often asked them to leave their jobs. Kundu & Gaba (2018) found that a higher level of work-family conflict and family-work conflict lead to emotional dissonance and made employees feel the compulsion to quit their jobs.

Only one woman reported that her mother-in-law remains sick and requires constant care and attention which is difficult for her to manage mainly due to non-availability of

husband for longer period, and that's the reason she has fixed her work timings and is unable to stay back for a long period of time at work.

About a fifth reported that they struggled to balance everything in family and workplace all alone, where their husbands had a choice and no one questioned them. Husbands were rarely available at home due to their touring or transferable jobs and odd working hours. They did not show interest or got involved in domestic chores or child care. Two women out of 28 felt that their husbands failed to understand their situation, thus create a fuss at home for food and cleanliness. Another two women had the prime responsibility to earn for living as their husbands weren't interested to earn and were not even bothered to make an effort.

Putting together both sources of data, it can be noted from Table 4.5 that twenty-eight percent women report that the role overload at home due to family responsibilities sometimes made it difficult for them to discharge their work responsibilities. The demands and responsibilities of family members sometimes interfere with work-related activities for almost 39% women. Nearly 43% of women reported that the dependent care issues at home and their family burden sometimes made it difficult for them to concentrate at their workplace, whereas for 33% it often hindered their work. One-tenth of women reported that sometimes they cannot discharge their duties properly because of their family problems and 25% women also feel that sometimes they have to postpone things at their work due to their demands on time at home.

Thirteen percent women reported that they find it difficult to complete their work on time due to their preoccupation with societal activities. All women mentioned the obligation to attend family functions, social functions or entertaining guests at home. Most of the times, in order to fulfil the societal obligations, women either took a half day leave or postponed their work.

### **Work to Family Conflict: Repercussions**

Frone (2003) notes that work demands, work role conflict, work role ambiguity, job distress or dissatisfaction, unfavourable work timings, hectic schedules and the encounters with non-supportive boss and colleagues become the source of disputes or act as factors that lead to Work-Family conflicts for women and their family where women are already burdened with family responsibilities, which was also observed through this study to some extent.

**Hectic timings and neglect of family demands and responsibilities-** Women in the study worked in government and private sector banks, hospitals, offices, schools at varied positions like managerial, administrative, teachers, doctors, nurses, window operator, etc. Those women who were self-employed owned preschools, had their own catering business, owned a franchise of beauty products, were freelancers, trainers, doctors with own clinics and hospitals. Twenty three percent of women reported that sometimes they come home too late to carry out the family roles, demands and expectations. Around 29% of women said that due to their increased workload, they were unable to meet the demands of their children who waited for them the whole day and their in-laws and felt guilty for it. The expectations, demands of the workplace differed according to the nature of work. Those working as teachers had to stay back for long, had backlog and sometimes had to carry workload home; those working as doctors and nurses in hospitals had to be prepared and ready for any emergencies; those working at banks and other offices had their own challenges to meet the deadlines and targets. In some cases, the time to leave for the workplace was fixed but the time of returning home was not fixed due to which they often reached home late. Few women reported the time of commute between their homes and workplace to be very long which made them physically tired and the time consumed in commute delayed their other errands like cooking and childcare; for a few women the schedules were so busy that they could just cook food, serve their family and just went off to bed..

Forty six percent women reported that due to their workload, they fail to give proper attention and care to their in-laws. They were sometimes able to spare time and fulfil in-laws' expectations but hardly could engage in conversation which often annoyed the in-laws. A secondary section educator shared-

*They have an expectation in terms of visiting them and that is possible only during weekends. So, this is always a problem that we experience and we are not able to spare much time for the visit. The entire week remains hectic for us and we get only 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday as an off from school so I think of completing the pending tasks on weekends, and then I do not feel like to visit them but in-laws always complain about it to my husband.*

A freelancer reported

*My parents are nearby and they do visit us and this annoys my in-laws. We have never told them not to visit us, it's them who don't want to visit. I always tell my*

*husband what's the drama about and that if they want to come, they are most welcome. They should not have the expectation that their daughter in law will come to invite them. I can't do it again and again, it's their wish. I can't do the formalities. I already have so many assignments to complete.*

The husbands also expected time from women, but their work schedules didn't allow it to happen and that's the reason that for 15% women, husbands got annoyed with their wives' work schedules and preoccupation with work. Women expected their husbands to understand their role overload and the time constraint they experience to manage everything. As reported by a teacher from a private school with low work-family balance in Box 4.4.

Almost all employed women had little or no flexibility regarding their work timings. Almost 84% of women reported that sometimes due to their increased work demands and hectic schedule either their family demands get postponed or they failed to fulfil the family responsibilities. The foremost reason that makes employees dislike their job is the long working hours at the workplace. Working for long and non-fixed hours on a regular basis including over time, training after working hours makes it a stressful event. The number of working hours and the duration of work influence the work-family balance negatively in almost more than 38% of the cases. One of the negative influences is the constraints of time for their family. Its only self-employed women who were at an advantage as they could be flexible in their work timings and could also make arrangement for their children at their office when needed. A dentist, preschool owner, an owner of a beauty parlour and two freelancers mentioned that they could work with flexibility but there remained constant pressure on them to meet the expectations of their clients. The increased workload, last moment completions and deadlines put a strain on women's time for their families. Research on married working women shows that they are unable to give time to their dependents and children as they are compelled to meet the demands of their workplace (Kumar, Murthy, & Chaitra, 2016; Shiva, 2013). Krishnamurthi & Vaanmalar (2016) found a statistically significant relationship between marital status and overtime work as 60% employees i.e. 30 women from the total of 50 accepted the fact that they work overtime. Box 4.4 illustrates responses of women where they share about the ways work hinders their family demands and responsibilities.

**Box 4.4 How Work Inhibited My Family Demands and Responsibilities*****Annoyed Family due to work schedule:***

*“To be frank I find it is very difficult to manage everything. It is very hectic, and workload is too high to bear. Our work timings are 8:30 am to 2 pm but we never punch at 2 pm for home. It is really demanding and with no support from workplace. My mother in-law and husband get annoyed due to my long working hours and non-availability at home. They often ask me to leave the job, but I want to do something, so can't leave the job just like that.” (A teacher from private school with high-work family balance)*

***Neglected Family Demands and responsibilities due to lack of support and work timings:***

*“At times when I have family matters to be handled or solve family related issues, leave is not granted. No matter what the emergency is at home, I am not able to leave from office and at that point of time I am not able to manage, so my husband somehow manages to look after the matter at that point of time. Bosses don't cooperate and say to manage and if unable to do it I should leave my job. The timings are fixed from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm and the time can get extended after 5:30 pm as per workload.” (A senior medical officer working in a private hospital with low work family balance )*

***Marital Relation Affected/Annoyed Husband due to work***

*“Many times, it happens that my husband gets annoyed with me because I am unable to give time to our relationship and also, he expects me to give time to his business which is difficult at times along with my work. He expects me to spend time with him, but it is very difficult for me for which I feel guilty too.” (A teacher from private school with low work-family balance)*

***Diminished Family Happiness due to work stress, lack of support , lack of facilities***

*We have our children growing up who need to be looked after; mother in law expects me to prioritize family than work, husband expects everything to be perfect when he is home. Sometimes everything gets neglected and becomes a mess because I can't spare time for these. Sometimes I overreact with my children and mother in law which is not needed I feel. If the things are not in place or order his mood gets spoilt and gets angry which at times leads to disappointments and disagreements between us and everyone's mood gets spoilt. (A teacher from private school with high work family balance)*

***Ignored Child due to work schedule, lack of facilities:***

*At times I feel that if I work little less as compared to what I do I may be able to spare more time with my kids. They do expect me to be around them that is one of the biggest demands but every time it's difficult for me to be around.” (A dentist with high work family balance )*

***Missed Social Functions due to work schedule and lack of facilities:***

*“Sometimes I have functions at my in-laws place, but I am not able to attend because I just have 15 CLs which I preserve it for my son because I may need it in time of emergency. At times clashes do happen with in-laws as I am not able to attend it. In-laws always complain that I am never present there, which I feel is okay.” (A secondary section educator in a private school with moderate work family balance)*

**Negativity in the work environment** - Nearly 8-10% of women reported that they sometimes experience difficulties due to their non-supportive boss and colleagues. Few women reported about the non-equal treatment at their workplace not only in terms of gender but also in terms of hierarchal positions i.e. senior or junior employee. Junior employees were taken for granted, were provided with no benefits and always made to work for a longer period of time with no appreciation or acknowledgement of work. In contrast, women at higher positions or seniority in terms of years of work experience were given all the benefits from the organisation, were allowed to delegate tasks to the juniors irrespective of the increased workload.

An administrative in charge in a government office reports about the discrimination she experienced at her workplace due to cultural difference. She was new to the city but the colleagues at her workplace always made her feel uncomfortable, ignored her, did not support to which she felt low at her workplace and often cried when home because no one was helping her. A school teacher from private sector reports that at her school the principal used to always look down on them as they were women. Their capabilities and performance were always doubted and questioned and this annoyed them. These stresses were then carried back home where they vented these frustrations on their husbands or children. Similar responses were reported by nine other women working as a senior medical officer in private hospitals, desk officer in a government office, special assistant in government administration, teachers in private and government schools and as assistant manager for legal matters in a private firm. An administrative in-charge shared that she was discriminated at her workplace based on her culture i.e. she being a Non-Gujarati. Her colleagues ignored her, the boss was non-supportive and she was given increased workload compared to other colleagues. A senior medical officer also shared how she was asked to leave her job by her colleagues and bosses because she was a mother and kept worrying about her child.

Teachers in school especially feel that their skills are being underutilised, their creativity and inputs are just taken for granted and one secondary section educator feels she is being looked down by her colleagues for having a high designation at an early age. One of the teachers revealed that her headmistress had developed favouritism towards few colleagues in school, so every time she either favoured them or appreciated them and when she tried to question or get her doubts clarified, she was ignored and rather labelled by her staff as 'dumb'. She feels all teachers should be treated equally and given an equal chance to prove themselves rather than just a few taking the credit every time. Children of these

teachers also studied in the same school where they taught, so they feel why their mothers are not appreciated or recognised in school. This also made the mothers feel guilty about themselves and feel low when their children asked them about it.

The bosses in the organization/workplace provided a limited scope to women to share or discuss their concerns, issues and problems. Mostly the year-end meetings were the time to discuss and communicate about their workload, feelings and other concerns. The bosses ignored discussions about family-related difficulties women experienced due to their work because they did not want to support women by providing the facilities that could ease out the process for them. Few women discussed with their management for providing a creche or alternative child care arrangement, flexible working hours and some adjustment to their schedules, but it was of no use, rather they were asked to leave the job if they couldn't manage. They were just provided with maternity leave and were denied creche facility as it could divert women's attention from work and could create disturbance in the workplace. Palanivel & Sinthuja (2012) states that the lack of childcare facilities in the workplace made it stressful for women to cope. Also, women did not find any well generated and well established formal arrangements or formal equal opportunities program to manage work-family balance. The lack of availability of programs or any facilities for women makes the accessibility and availability of resources uncertain. Apart from the childcare facilities, they rarely received any benefits like increment, promotion, training or any other provisions that could help them upgrade their employment status and enhance their family lifestyle. Responses of women are of example in box 4.4.

Vegad (2015) found that the intrusion of work into their personal life and family life was more compared to the intrusion of the personal with their professional lives. Doctors also reported that they did not receive much support from their workplace and whatever support they received was from their family and socialization. This support helped doctors retain their competency, achievement and motivation levels at work. Doctors also reported the need for work-life balance programs that could provide them flexible work arrangements, leave arrangements, travel arrangements, reduced and compressed week hours, and paid vacations would enhance their work-family balance.

Women were annoyed because none of their concerns were considered by their workplace. They were neither allowed to leave the premises during the work hours nor were provided with any support. It was left to the women to manage the situation and almost all

employed women complained about the limited leaves provided to them. It was very difficult for them to adjust and manage within those limited leaves, so most of them preserved the leaves for their family emergency.

Women also strongly felt that their efforts to stay back to complete the pending work was not acknowledged or appreciated at their workplaces. Women spend time at their workplace to meet the deadlines and targets ignoring or postponing their family demands and even sacrifice on their family time, but none of their efforts were taken into consideration anywhere.

These results are in corroboration with various studies where Manfredi & Holliday, 2004 in Oxford Brookes; Shiva, 2013 in Kerala; Tasnim, Hossain, & Enam, 2017 in Bangladesh reveal that the lack of support from the workplace was one of the factors that hindered the everyday process of work-family balance. Most employees in the study stated that they did not receive the much-needed support from their supervisors, due to which they found it difficult to meet the demands of their families.

**Diminished happiness-** As already mentioned, the negative spillover is the transfer of bad moods and frustrations from one domain to the other domain, so the discomfort, frustrations of work sometimes get carried over to family too (Abboud, 2015). At times, the frustration of the workplace gets vented out at family members, especially children and husband. The non-availability of women at home and the vent out of the frustration on family members disturbs the family atmosphere and made family members annoyed with each other. Nineteen percent women reported that sometimes the stress originating at their workplace drastically affected their family happiness. Almost 47% of women report that they were unable to manage their tasks and time resulting in the neglect/postponement of work and family demands. Women were compelled to fulfil their responsibilities with no choice. These stressors then took a toll on their health, sometimes as reported by 26% women, that they sometimes felt physically tired due to role overload (53%); mentally stressed due to family stress, care responsibility and issues and increased work demands (57%). Due to their busy work schedules, 24% of women were not able to get adequate sleep. A little less than half of the women reported that the tiresome demands of work did not allow them to lead the life they liked and created difficulties in their personal life, as a result, they were unsatisfied with their personal lives.

The results of Martinez, Demerouti, Bakker, & Boz (2015) showed that the presence of daily personal resources was essential to buffer the spillover of interpersonal conflict at work and non-work domain and when employees were not very optimistic, resilient interpersonal conflicts resulted in higher strain-based work-life conflict experiences.

**Missed social functions-** Twenty-seven percent of women report that sometimes they were not able to make it for the social functions or family gathering due to their work commitments. In very few cases the relatives and the people attending function were understanding about their schedules, otherwise, relatives and family members used to get annoyed with their absence. Guests at home also add to their stress at times because if they arrive unexpectedly, it was difficult for them to entertain them and their planned things get distorted. The inability to entertain guests was thought disrespectful and negligent to the family members. In some cases, women felt helpless with the situation and sometimes felt frustrated or irritated.

As cited by Crouter in (Jenkins, Repetti, & Crouter, 2000) that working mothers with high work pressure experience greater workload, feel overwhelmed and face increased conflict with their adolescent children. Doble & Supriya (2010) studied the spillover of work into the family and found that 52% of women are unable to spend time with families. 47% of women do not have leisure time; 50% of women had recurring thoughts of work at home and 50% feel that their work is affecting the quality of their family life. 43% of women reported health issues and lack of sleep as a result of work stress and 34% reported the feeling of exhaustion.

**Negative spillover and its effects on women:** The negative spillover of work and family also took a toll on women's health and leading to declining levels of productivity and efficiency (Dubey, 2010; Efraty, Lee, Siegel, & Sirgy, 2001). Most women reported of being exhausted, several said that they felt constantly stressed and had difficulty finding any sort of balance in their lives, reporting little energy for weekend activities after working long hours during the week and each woman reported getting insufficient sleep (Neault & Pickerell, 2005). Though the literature on sleep deprivation consistently recommends at least eight hours of sleep per night (National Sleep Foundation, 2004), working mothers did not receive that amount of sleep. Some clients and colleagues acknowledged that even eight hours of sleep per night was not enough for them to feel rested. To achieve everything they planned or what they were expected to do, many women sacrificed their sleep and risked their personal

well being. Every interviewee in the study by Tasnim, Hossain, & Enam, 2017 experienced frequent headache, had become edgy and few had hypertension.

Almost all women reported that they could not spare time for their own selves, could not engage in activities of their interest, could not pay attention to their grooming, but only 10 women with high and moderate work-family balance could manage to spend time for themselves. But in case of women with low work-family balance, none of them could spare time for their own self.

The study (Canivet, et al., 2010) in Malmo, Sweden found exhaustion and job strain to be more prevalent in women than in men. The findings of the study revealed that 16% of women and 8% of men consider themselves exhausted. And work-family conflict, family-work conflict, job strain and low job support was strongly correlated to exhaustion in both men and women. Based on the Swedish longitudinal occupational survey of health, the study Leineweber, Baltzer, Magnusson, & Westerlund (2013) showed that work-family conflict was associated with an increased risk of emotional exhaustion among both men and women. The risk of poor self-rated health was substantially more influenced by work-family conflict among women than men.

The findings of Vegad (2015) reveal that doctors from public and private hospitals of Nashik and Mumbai cities reported moderate levels of overall job satisfaction and lower affective job satisfaction. They had low affection and attachment towards the job and hospital. Doctors mostly experienced distress, fatigue, anger and nervousness due to their schedules characterized by tremendous for pressure and stress.

The meta-analysis by Ford, Heinen, & Langkamer (2007) suggests that a considerable amount of variability in family satisfaction can be explained by work domain specific variables, whereas considerable amount of variability in job satisfaction could be explained by family domain specific variables and it also tells that job and family stress have the strongest effects on work-family conflict and cross-domain satisfaction. The study Amstad, Meier, Fasel, Elfering, & Semmer (2011) found work interference with family and family interference with work to be consistently related to work-related outcomes, family-related outcomes and domain unspecific outcomes.

### **Coping with The Push and Pull Between Work and Family**

As already discussed in the previous section, that negative spillover between work and family brings about difficulties in both the spheres. Women highlighted various factors at the workplace that come in way of family demands and expectations and the ways family becomes a barrier to achieve work demands and expectations. The 28 women who were interviewed discussed in detail about the ways they navigated their paths to arrive at a balance between work and family.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) defined coping as an individual's cognitive and behavioural effort to manage demands that could be taxing or exceeding the resources available to them. The definition explains coping as a process where an individual thinks and behaves in a specified stressful situation. The variables in the situation shape the efforts of an individual to manage demands for which the outcome could be successful or not successful, but the focus is on to manage the demands.

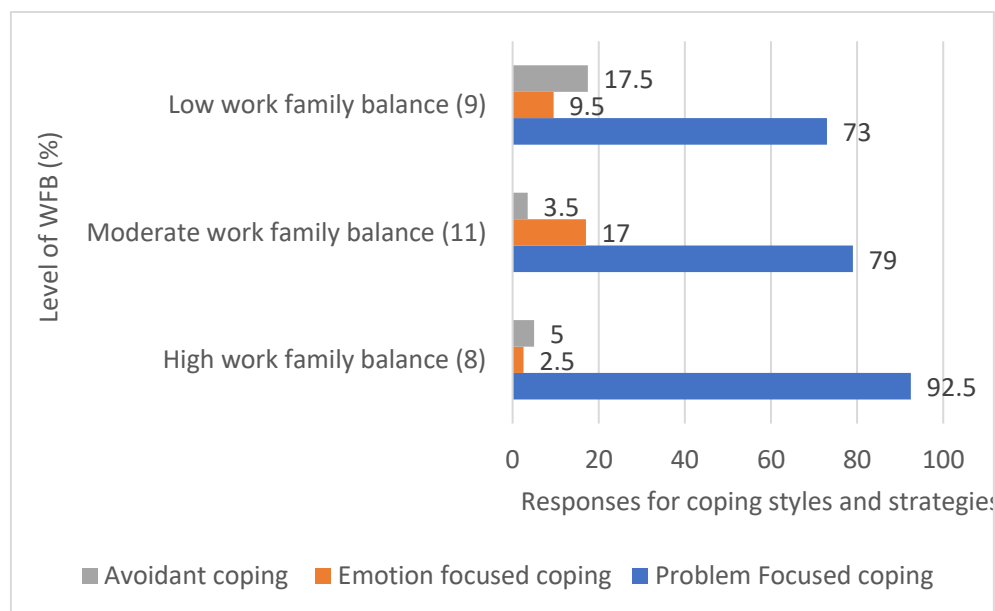
Women's coping styles and strategies varied in accordance with their personality and situational factors. The coping styles and strategies used by women were then analysed to see if women differed in their approach to the situations and if it had an effect on their work-family balance. It was found that women largely made use of three coping styles 1) Active coping that included Problem focused coping 2) Emotion focused coping 3) Avoidant coping.

Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub (1989) explain active coping as a process of taking steps to actively remove or obliterate its effects. Folkman, Lazarus, Schetter, DeLongis, & Gruen (1986) define this style of coping as problem focused coping style where all the active efforts focus on managing and changing the stressful situations by modifying or eliminating the sources of stress and the chief technique of this coping style is a modification in personal behaviour. This is done by initiating direct action increasing efforts and trying to execute the coping methods in a stepwise fashion. Planning is about how to cope with the stressors. It involves thinking about steps and how to best handle the problem. Active coping occurs during the coping phase, and planning occurs during the secondary appraisal. It also explains two types of problem focused coping where an individual may suppress competitive activities or restraint. Suppression of competing activities means to suppress the involvement in completing activities to properly tackle the problem. Restraint coping is to wait for an appropriate opportunity to act and not to act prematurely. Active coping is also to seek out social support for instrumental reasons to seek advice and assistance for information seeking.

Another coping method is behavioural disengagement where one reduces his and her efforts to deal with the stressors and even gives up attaining the goals. It is also referred to as helplessness and mostly occurs when people expect poor coping outcomes. Folkman et.al, (1986) explains this style of coping as an avoidant coping style.

Another coping method is mental disengagement where a person tries to engage himself or herself in those activities that would divert his/her mind off the problem, for which an individual also seeks out social support for emotional reasons to get moral support, sympathy or understanding which is emotion focused coping style (Folkman et.al, 1986).

The responses of women about the coping styles and strategies were analysed based on the theoretical explanations given by Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub (1989) and Lazarus and Folkman (1984) and an overall picture of the distribution of coping styles is presented in figure 4.4-



*Figure 4.4 Women's coping styles and strategies and their work-family balance*

**Problem focused Coping Style** - Figure 4.4. clearly shows that more than 90% responses of women with high work-life balance and 79 % responses from moderate WFB fall into problem focused style of coping indicating that they try to prevent the problem by conscious and active effort. Women with low work-life balance use this to a slightly lesser extent. Women primarily with high and moderate work-family balance reported that whenever they

experienced the overspill of demands and responsibilities of work and family, they tried to identify the source of the problem or the cause of conflicts to deal with it efficiently and to overcome the stress it caused as explained by problem focused coping style. The various coping strategies used by women to resolve the stressor are summarized in figure 4.5.

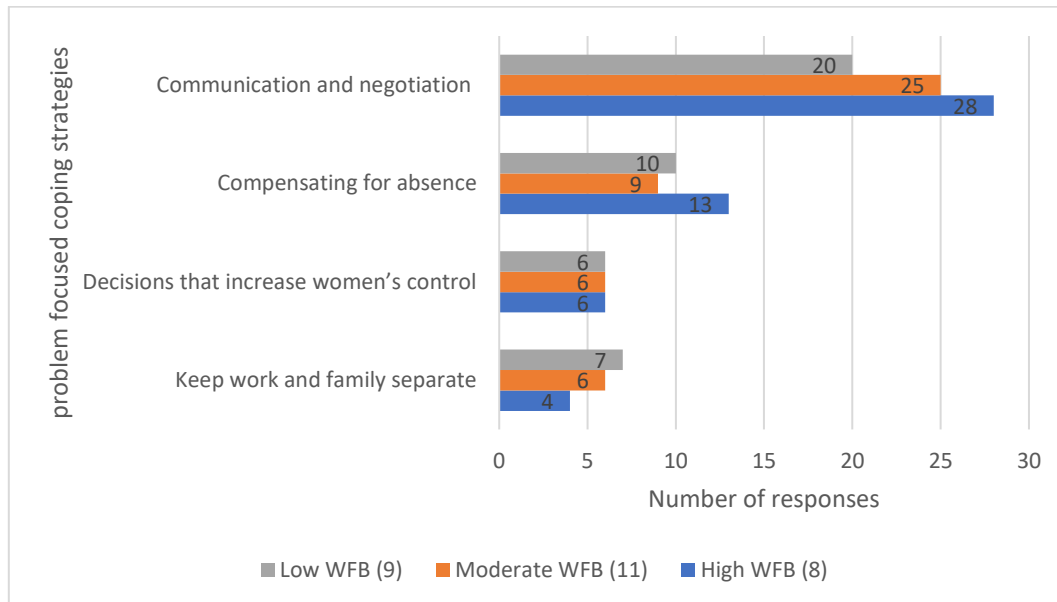


Figure 4.5 Problem focused coping strategies used by women

**Time management and prioritization** become essential elements for efficient management of demands and expectations of work and family. Time management refers to planning and scheduling the tasks and deciding the amount of time to be spared for each task. Women who run their own business though had the flexibility for work timings, but opted for fixed timings for work and were punctual as they believe it's their responsibility and credibility towards their clients. Every woman with high and moderate work-family balance reported that they planned their day with a systematic time bound schedule which they strictly adhere to and only became flexible with the household chores or other family responsibilities when some demand arises. They were well aware that a little leniency in work would spoil the entire schedule leading to inefficiency that brings disappointments. This was absolutely the opposite in the case of women with low work-family balance because they were often casual and flexible with their household chores and other responsibilities and most of their tasks were unplanned.

Women with high work-family balance mostly timed their tasks, and if their work hours get extended due to high demands, they managed those situations by making alternative

arrangements such as ordering food from outside or cooking simple meals and the like or go out to eat. This was less often done by women with moderate and low WFB. Most women with high work-family balance made preparations for the next day in advance, some had maintained a diary/sticky notes where they had the 'to do list' which was observed less in case of women with moderate work-family balance and almost Nil in low work-family balance. They also used home appliances like washing machine, mixer grinders, microwave, dishwashers to save time and increase efficiency and reduce dependence on others (Refer Figure 4.6 for women's responses). Unlike women with high and moderate work-family balance, low scorers could not plan their day efficiently- one due to time constraints, second low agency-self efficacy at work which again left no time for family and their own inability to deal with it efficiently.

Women planned their day and prepared a schedule based on their own priorities and needs, so that it could enable efficient management of responsibilities in family as well as workplace, either by themselves or hired help depending upon the requirements. Ninety percent women from a total of 122 (responses to the agency- self-efficacy scale) report that they have the scope/power to prioritize the demands of work or family as per their need of which 48% women with high and 38.5% women with moderate and 2.5% of women with low work-family balance reported this. Seventeen of the 28 interviewed women mentioned prioritizing as an important component to create a balance between work and family. They decide their course of action according to the priority and the importance of the situation or the role demands. They decide by analysing whether the situation requires immediate action or can be attended to later. The prioritization differed for every woman in terms of the child, in-laws care, husband's demands and demands and expectations of the workplace. The ways women manage their errands are illustrated below.

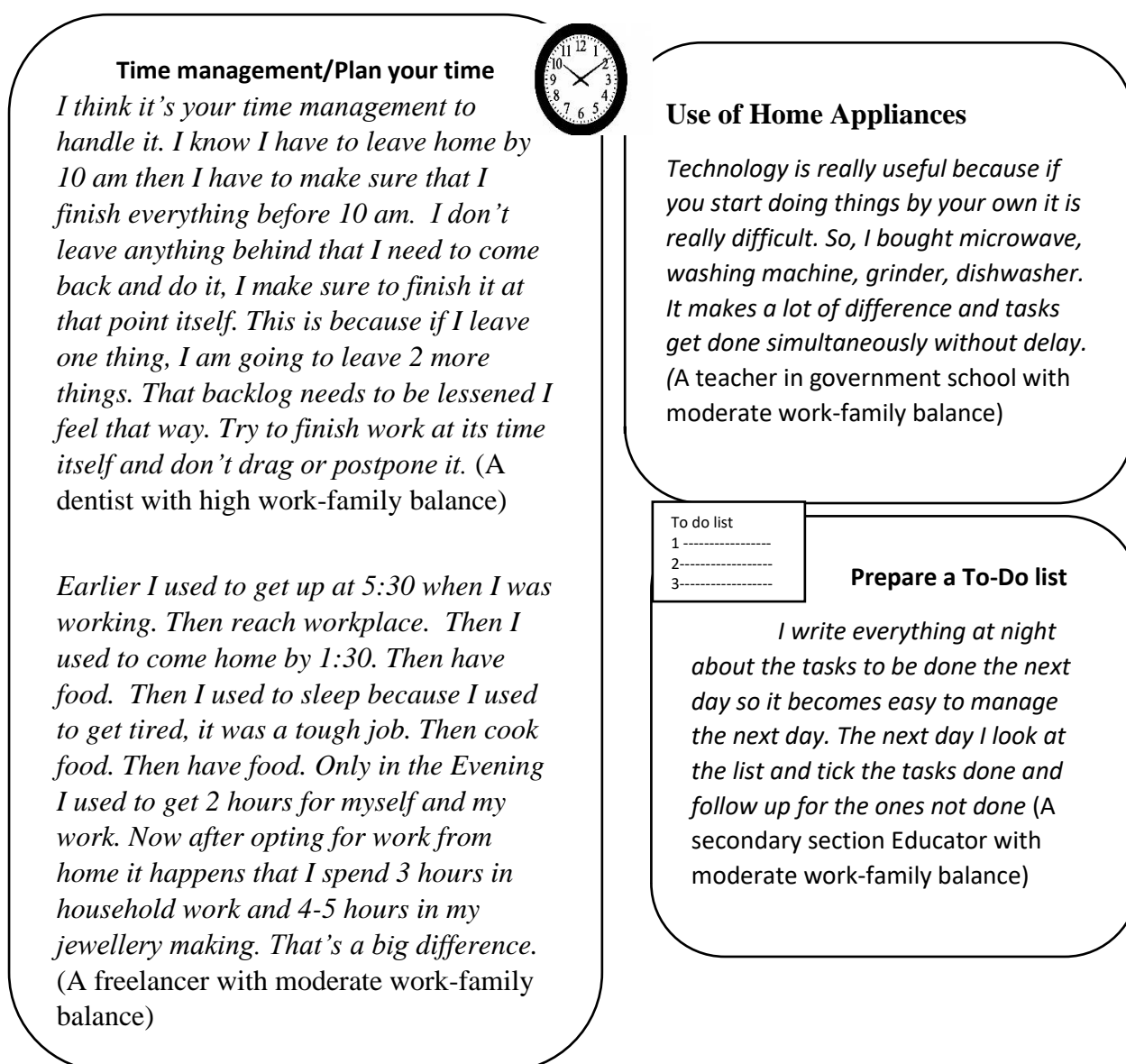


Figure 4.6 Women's responses to time management and prioritisation

**Communication and negotiation** - Most women mentioned that there were times when they had to communicate and negotiate for their decisions or a task with their husband, in-laws, children in families and with their colleagues or boss at workplace. Figure 4.5 clearly depicts that all women made an attempt to discuss their issues in family as well as workplace, but for most women with low work-family balance the negotiations weren't successful to a greater extent, whereas those with high and moderate work-family balance to a great extent were able to negotiate and take a stand for their own selves.

Twelve women reported that they explained their child about their work schedules and asked for their cooperation and support for the same, as already explained in the earlier section that cooperation from children acted as a great support for women. A secondary section educator in a private school reports-

*Now my son also understands that mamma needs to go for work, I explained to him twice or thrice. Initially, he always felt that all his friends' mothers are at home when they are home, so I felt very guilty at that time. This is because it is true that I am not home, but it's not when I have a holiday, I am with him. Then I made him understand about the situation. So now he understands and asks me smilingly sometimes if I will be home. Now he does his work on his own like he wears shoes, shirt, socks, and tie on his own. He would then feel happy and share with us. If we motivate him to do it, he would like to do it. I must say that I have a lot of support from my son too because he cooperates in the morning before going to school.*

Few women (5-6) had conflicts with their in-laws regarding the decision to work which they shared with their husband in anticipation of their support for the same. Most women interviewed did not subscribe to the traditional norms, but focused on their needs and requirements and adopted strategies that benefit them by seeking paid help for domestic chores and childcare. They also believed that both husband and wife are equally responsible for domestic chores and other family responsibilities. These women then negotiated with their in-laws with the support of their husbands to permit them to work. They succeeded in negotiating and were permitted to work, but their in-laws and husbands of few of those women (3-4) expected them to come back home early from their work and not to compromise their family responsibilities. They did not even permit them to travel alone.

*"We have a maid to take care of the chores. When I took care of the family, they were never satisfied or happy so I gave it to the maid. I wanted to do everything for them, I always tried to satisfy everyone and make everyone happy but what did I get? Nothing. So, I decided not to make everyone happy but do things that make me feel happy and gives me pleasure. I earn and spend, nobody can question me because I have demarcated and drawn the line."*

*"I have done my MBA. At the time of marriage itself, my family stated that they won't encourage 9 to 9 job. Even my husband was against it. So, I convinced him for this job because I wanted to do something, to gain*

*experience. It is important to negotiate. I am planning to work on my own from home in future.”* (High WFB, Private Sector employee, school teacher)

In 2-3 cases women discussed with their husbands about the increased expectations of in-laws and husbands supported them by talking to their parents (women's in-laws) who then lowered the expectations from women. Six women mentioned that their husbands were not involved or did not support them in any of the domestic chores or childcare. They then had to communicate with their husbands about the same and negotiated for their participation in domestic chores and other family responsibilities. Two women discussed with their mother-in-law to motivate their husbands to take initiative and participate in household chores and other family matters.

*“Generally, he does nothing but if his mother has asked him to do, he would do it. But he doesn't show his own initiative for family responsibilities. I expect him to take initiative because I am also a working woman.”*

Similarly, at their workplace nine women communicated their concerns with their management, bosses especially for the flexibility to attend to family emergencies as well as work-related issues. Few mentioned that they sought advice, and guidance from their bosses for their working style and the ways for better adjustment in the workplace. Bosses of only three women were supportive and guided them to navigate the workplace hurdles. In the case where leaves and holidays were limited, women negotiated with their bosses and even colleagues to make adjustments in their schedules but it was not successful. Not many women reported that they communicated or negotiated with the colleagues about their family issues or work-related issues, because they found it to be not useful and that it would not yield any solution rather bring them disappointments and embarrassments. So, they also avoided reactions, arguments, confrontations with staff, maintained a professional attitude, socialized and were good to people but restricted themselves to their own work.

*My work is a place where people talk about all sorts of things. Since work is important to me, I have made myself such that, it does not impact my work quality. More so I try to remain happy at work.....ignoring all other things. Family is important to me. So, no matter how much workload you have or frustrated or tired you are, I try not to show it at home.... but try to achieve balance by altering my schedules, preparing in advance or taking some time off.* (High WFB, Deputy Manager, HR, Private sector employee)

Twelve women of which six women with high work-family balance, four with moderate and two with low work-family balance reported that they tried not to merge work and family and kept them separate and were successful as they had control. Women with high work-family balance did not find keeping work and family separate as a very special effort because they were used to the schedule and their time management, whereas women with moderate and low balance reported that they tried to keep them separate but often blended them. A deputy HR manager reports in a private firm reports-

*“Actually, the thing is that I don’t mix professional and personal life. I keep both the things separate and I don’t carry backlog at home. I don’t even share with them because it’s nothing related to them. Only in case of emergency or when I have a problem, I share with them.”*

A secondary section educator adds on -

*“Initially I wasn’t able to manage between family and the workplace, but eventually I learnt to manage. When I am in the office I forget about home and when I am home, I don’t worry about the office that much. I have to carry work home but then I have to give time to my family, my child also, I need to look after his studies.”*

**Compensate for absence** - Twenty-one women mentioned that due to their hectic schedules and odd work timings they were unable to spare time for their kids. So, seventeen women reported that when they went home, they spent time with their kids and enjoyed being with them and tried not to get angry with them. Children enjoyed their presence and did all the activities that children were interested in like art and craft, music, dance, planned weekend out to visit places of their child’s interest. They also spared time to help children complete their school homework. One of the ways women feel they could manage the tasks as well as spend time with their child is to involve them in household chores. This way children learn as well enjoy to be with their mothers.

A JRF working in the University reports-

*“We sit together, he will sit with his own books and I would take my work, so then we do our work and this is how I try to manage. Then I prepare food and do other stuff at home which is always there. So, he also joins me in making food, so that ways too we spend time together.”*

Fifteen women mentioned that they tried to spare time for their husband because most of them felt that their marital relationship was getting affected negatively due to their role

overload and preoccupation with work. They also reported that they could not spare time to satisfy the sexual needs of their husband, and therefore their sexual life was also getting spoilt. Apart from this, when the husbands planned vacations and outings, women tried to be a part of it as a way to show interest and involvement in their relationship. Almost all women reported husband's support to be very essential for a working woman, so spending time with him is very essential. Four women reported that they tried to spare time for their in-laws to visit them, go out with them or just socialize with them whenever time permits. A government desk officer reports-

*My husband has a touring job so he has visited most of the places in India but I am not able to due to my mother in law who is sick and dependent on me. Secondly because of time constraints, sometimes I feel for it. So, when he is home whenever time permits, I go out with him for movies or just outing.*

**Decisions that increase their control** - Seven women out of which three women with high, 2 with moderate and 2 with low work-family balance reported that they were efficient managers with increased agency-self-efficacy for matters related to work and family. To illustrate four women tried to negotiate with their in-laws to work, but the in-laws were stubborn with their decisions, so these women went against their in-law's decision and with support of husband started working by living separate from their in-laws. Another reason for the majority of women to shift from joint families to nuclear families was due to the conflicts with in-laws or inability to fulfil their demands and that their in-laws always had to complain about something or the other. They took decisions that could help them navigate the negative spillover of demands and expectations of work and family. One of the examples of this is the decision to stay separate from in-laws. Most women initially stayed with in-laws but then with the support of their husband and their own efficacy, they were able to set up a different household for themselves.

*With in-laws ideologies differing from mine, basically, I wanted my daughter to have clear values, otherwise, she will be confused between mine and in-laws value system. If I want her to get my values, she should get only that. So, for this, I asked my husband to live separately from in-laws." (High WFB, self-employed)*

Overall women exhibit high to moderate agency- self-efficacy and are able to navigate the negative spillover of demands and expectations of work and family in a productive way.

They directly deal with stressors and enhance their lives. However, there are women who deal with these situations either emotionally or just leave it unattended.

These results hold true with the findings of Baltes & Heydens (2003) which found that the use of general SOC behaviour (that is selection, optimisation and compensation behaviour) in both work and family were related to lower amount of job and family stresses and subsequently low amount of work interference with family conflict and family interference with work conflicts which is also evident in women with high work-family balance.

**Emotion focused Coping Style-** A style of coping is explained by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) which involves emotional reactions to a situation and leaving the actual cause of problem unattended. It involves sharing emotions/feelings with significant others and obtaining emotional support. In such a coping style, the focus is on resolving the matter but just reactions to the situations i.e. how women react in the situation? The reaction could be positive which is positive emotion focused coping, but when the reactions are negative or that do not bring any good in return, it is negative emotion focused coping style.

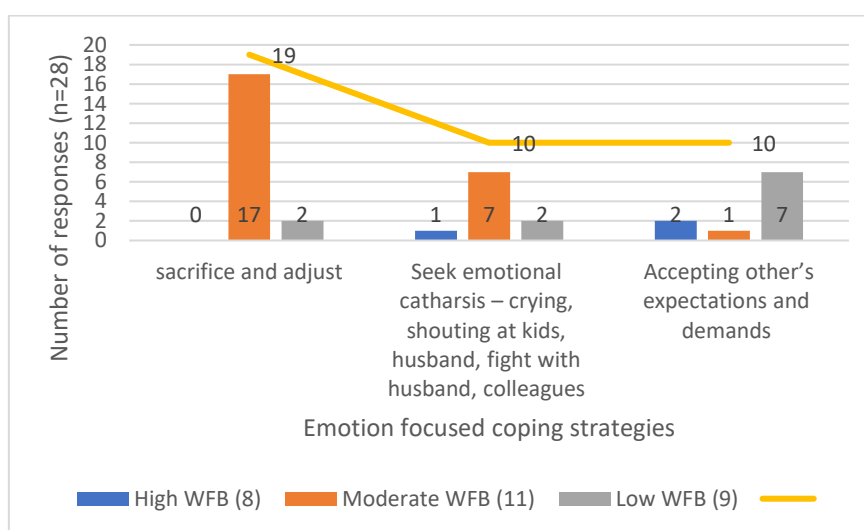


Figure 4.7 Women's emotion focused coping strategies

**Sacrifices and adjustment-** Most women with moderate work-family balance reported that sacrifices and adjustment are a part of life and one must make them. It is sacrifices and adjustment that enables the relationship to persist and it would be a fantasized world where married women have not sacrificed or have not adjusted. Women with high work-family balance did not report incidences of sacrifice but did mention that they had

sacrificed before, but now they have overcome and accepted the situations as it's not worth mentioning. Women with low work-family balance did not report much about sacrifices and adjustments but it could be seen that they largely accept and adjust according to other's demands and expectations in the family as well as workplace, making it difficult to cope with the situations and continue to live with conflicts and having a low work-family balance.

Most responses for sacrifices and adjustments were in terms of the kind of occupation that they chose to meet or fulfil the demands and expectations of their family members. They reported that women needed to compromise either work or family to be able to balance between the two and if one believes that she would be able to balance between both work and family, then she should be prepared for it and develop ways to be able to fulfil it. Some even sacrificed on their promotions, higher designations, travel in work just for the family. The findings also corroborate with Levitov, et.al, (2015) where it states that though women have become a large contributor in the labour force, they still hold very few positions of power because the time and energy that they spend on unpaid care holds them back to take higher positions.

Two women with high work-family balance and two women with low and one with moderate work-family balance reported that women need to accept the responsibility of household chores and other family duties even if they need to go beyond their capacities to fulfil the same. And it is women who need to increase the stamina to be able to fulfil all the demands and expectations. They even have to sacrifice their health and even compromise on the sleep to complete the domestic chores, complete their work, and fulfil the demands of their family, which result in various health issues and mental stress. Two women with high work-family balance reported that their family culture did not encourage women's employment but with their negotiation, they were allowed to work but with the clear description of the kind of work they could opt for. So, these two women feel that they had to sacrifice a lot to be able to work outside home, adjust in the family and maintain a relationship with family members because they allowed them to work. Almost all women with their husbands mutually adjusted with each other's work schedule, expectations, behaviour and attitudes to maintain their marital relationship. Almost all women mentioned that they had to accept and adjust to their husband's working schedule, his non-availability for a prolonged period, non-support in domestic chores or other family responsibilities. Few women reported that their husbands were completely not involved in domestic chores,

childcare or any other family responsibility but they avoided any reactions to their husbands to maintain the family harmony and avoid conflicts.

Even at the workplace women adjusted in the negative environment where the boss and colleagues were not supportive and continued working sacrificing on the benefits they are entitled to receive from their workplace.

Few women reported that adjustment and sacrifices had become a normal component of their life and they had to do it to maintain peace between work and family so that they were able to work. Women needed to give up their ego and work in accordance to the expectations from them. Few women did not opt for paid help because they feel that the maids won't be as dedicated as them, so they continued doing the work on their own, compromising their health, feeling tired and stressed the whole day. They mention that this is one of the ways in which they can save money for the family. A staff Nurse, government sector with Low work-family balance reports-

*“One is that it has become my habit! And secondly, my grandmother used to tell me that I should do everything in the home like I should help my mother in household work and all other works at home so that I can be ready for the future role as a good wife and daughter in law. So, there is a compulsion and obligation to fulfil all my duties very well, so others will not have a chance to complain.”*

However, except two women with high work-family balance, none of the women with high and moderate work-family balance reported that adhering to the traditional expectations is a must for women. Women with low work-family balance reported more adherence to the family traditional norms resulting in guilt, regret and lack of satisfaction.

**Seek emotional catharsis** - Eight women reported that they sought emotional catharsis for the frustrations they had at their workplace. All eight women reported that often they returned home frustrated and most of the times the frustration of the workplace was vented out on their husband, mother in law or children. They shouted at their children, scolded them and on little matters fought with their husbands. Almost all women felt guilty afterwards. They mentioned that it was a natural reaction to the frustrations that they were facing and did not mean to do it intentionally. Fights or conflicts with husband due to the frustrations of overload responsibilities was a common way to release their tensions.

*“If I am very frustrated and angry and if he says something, I vent out everything on him. Recently I experienced this, I was very disturbed, he said something and he shifted my purse from here to there. It was a very small thing and I shouted.... and I know I shouldn't have reacted so much I thought later on.”* (Moderate WFB, Secondary Section Educator, Private Sector)

Two women reported they cried over the situations prevailing at their workplace because it was difficult for them to handle the discriminations against them and the ways they were looked down. They could not resolve the issue and had no agency-self efficacy for the matters at workplace, so they felt that crying out would relax them. One of the women with moderate work-family balance reported that she shared everything with her husband, but if he was busy or not available, she had maintained a diary in which she wrote about her feelings, thoughts and whatever frustrations she had and whatever happened on that day.

Along with these coping styles, women's personal attitude also played an important role. Eleven women reported that they tried to avoid the negative thoughts/ feelings towards the situations and inculcate positive thoughts, kept themselves motivated towards the situation. However, this was seen more in women with high and moderate work-family balance than women with low work-family balance.

**Avoidant Coping** - A style of coping where women avoid dealing with the conflicts that result from the negative spillovers of demands and responsibilities and they continue living accepting those situations. They develop an attitude *“the things would remain as they are so why deal with it? let it be!”* This style of coping was observed in all women in different situations and conditions. Given the situation, women are unable to deal with it and then they accept the situations as it is and decide to live in a conflicting state.

**Inability to deal with conflicts** - Five women reported that they had to accept family demands and situations. An administrative in-charge in a government office with moderate work-family balance reported that her husband was completely non-supportive and did not earn for the family, so she was primarily and solely responsible for arranging finances to run the family. Her husband did not take any initiative for anything, but she could not do anything because he was allowing her to work. And she did not want to lose the chance to work, so she was prepared to live in such a situation though she is physically and mentally stressed.

Twelve women reported various situations where they had no choice but to opt for avoiding coping such as increased in law's expectations, role overload, the negativity at the workplace, conflict with husband, the terms and conditions levied by the family for their paid work. In cases where the in-laws were non-supportive, women decided to avoid interaction with them or discussing anything because it worsened the matter for them. They even decided to stay separate from them and ignore them but the conflicts with them continued.

#### **Box 4.5- Let it be as it is! Women's Expressions**

*"It is really difficult to manage, husband also gets annoyed at times like this time he had a vacation but I didn't have, he expects me to spend time with him but it really becomes impossible for me. Household work, work pressure and other expectations of the family really make life difficult at times and in it, we don't have and get time for our self. Majority of the time goes into the kitchen, so what else we can do. My health is getting affected, I don't get proper sleep, children are getting affected and it's a vicious circle that keeps going on."* (Low WFB, Assistant Manager Legal, Pvt Sector employee)

*It's a total mess, I find it very difficult to manage everything and I am not able to balance. I am unable to give time to my husband and daughter due to my projects or something or the other that comes up unplanned. My husband plans a weekend out but if I am not able to make it, he gets annoyed and we both have arguments too. Often my husband and daughter remain annoyed with me, but it's too demanding for me to reach out to everything and this continues with no end to it.* (Low WFB, Teacher, Government sector employee)

Secondly, women experienced overloading of demands and expectations, but because of their hectic work timings, they were unable to make any other arrangements for household chores or for childcare. Even if they had an arrangement, they were unable to manage time and experienced a lot of difficulties to fulfil the demands and expectations of family and workplace due to which often their work and family demands and expectations remained incomplete or postponed.

Similarly, at workplace few women reported bullying and labelling by their colleagues but they could not deal with it and continued to work in that situation without questioning or having a stand for it because they knew nothing would work out in their favour. Two women with high work-family balance reported that they could not deal with the increased expectations of their families, but they had no control over it, they had to do it. The differences in their attitudes towards their work, different family cultures, the terms and conditions placed by them for their work made them very uncomfortable, but they decided to

ignore those aspects, even their career and personal interest for their family because they are permitted to work.

Women with low work-family balance had increased demands and expectations from their families in terms of fulfilment of domestic chores and physical care of the family. These women were occupied in the dilemmas to decide their priorities. The family still continues to be the topmost priority for maximum women as reported in the study by Sriram (2019). The difficulties to come out of the trap resulted in problems for them which they are unable to manage and therefore, they had to continue living with those conflicting situations.