

The Benefits and Challenges of Practicing Work-Life Balance Among Women Entrepreneurs

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Abstract: *In Today's Fast Paced Business World, The Ability To Achieve Work Life Balance (WLB) Is Becoming More And More Difficult As People Are Constantly Pushed To Work Faster To Cope With An Increasing Workload. This Paper Presents A Review Of The Challenges And Contribution (Benefit) Of Practice Work – Life Balance. Women Entrepreneurial Success In Their Life And Business Always Being Connected With The Excellent Management Of WLB. An Overview Of The Issues Surrounding Women Entrepreneur Development Draw To The Extension Of More Literature Reviews. Therefore, 34 Articles Have Been Selected And Analysed. There Was Found That Applying Of Work – Life Balance Was Increase Dual Earner For Family Economy And Improving Productivity In The Business. Meanwhile The Main Challenges Of WLB Implementation Among Woman Entrepreneurs Has Always Related To Time Management And Busy Schedule At Work Place. Based On The Issues Identified, Work – Life Balance Strategies Are Proposed To Increased Malaysian Woman Entrepreneurial Potential, Enhance Their Wellbeing In Life And Encourage Them To Part In Business.*

Keywords: *Work-Life Balance, Wellbeing, Women Challenges, Women Entrepreneurship*

I. INTRODUCTION

The participation of women in the workforce has become a common view as they are expected to play equal contribution as the male counterpart in the family income. However, there has been a reduced rate of women participation in the workplace recently as it has been reported only 49.6 per cent of women participation in the workplace in year 2015 in comparison to 52.4 percent in 1995 (ILO 2016). [33] We are examined in SMEs sector while services and other sectors must have sales turnover

lowest than 20 million and must have full employee. [34] Stressed that in Pakistan SMEs also have major contribution to their economy. Further, the gender gap in the employment rate amounted to 25.5 percent disfavoring women compared to only 0.6 percent in 1995 (ILO 2016). The reduced rate in woman's participation is commonly caused by reasons, such as barriers in the overtime schedule, commitment at home and impact of the economic downturn. [24] However, some women have low of self-motivation because they have barriers to develop their self and lack of confident.

Unlike the trend of women participation in the workforce, there have been an increasing number of women. [28] pointed that human resources are also important to develop the business performance. In Malaysia, women entrepreneurs are viewed as a significant contributors to the national economy as they contribute over 30 per cent in micro and small enterprises (Sayed Samer Ali Al-shami et al. 2016; ILO 2016) They are considered as important resources for Malaysia's economic growth and personal prosperity (Al-Shami et al. 2017; Samer et al. 2015) as well as their household welfare (S. A. Al-shami et al. 2017; Sayed Sameer Ali Al-shami, Majid, and Rashid 2014). [31] In addition, the economic growth in Malaysia were mainly based on SMEs. [30] stated that SMEs offer many opportunities for international investors and partners. As shown in Figure 1, the Economic Census 2016 on Profile of SMEs stated that SMEs are the backbone in the Malaysia economy, in which 20.6% of the SMEs in Malaysia in owned by women.

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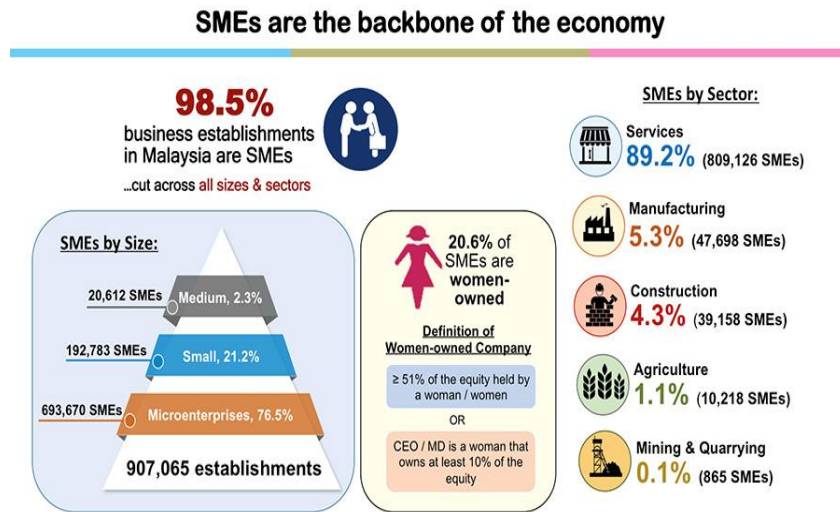


Figure 1: Women Entrepreneurs in Malaysian SMEs

To become a successful woman entrepreneur, it is very challenging as it involves strong motivation and multitasking skill especially in balancing between business and family responsibilities (Rey-Martí, Tur Porcar, and Mas-Tur 2015). [23] pointed that women are more influence to the social networking impact, in the same time will enhance productivity in the business. In comparison to men, [5] claimed that women entrepreneurs are found to face bigger challenges as they have to struggle to perform their domestic role as well as entrepreneurial role. (Noraini 2006)pointed that WLB practice will have low impact to work – family conflict. (Taylor 2001) stressed that women entrepreneurs have difficulties to achieve success if they combine with work and family matters. However, little is known whether female entrepreneurs practice work-life balance in pursuing their endeavor to become success entrepreneurs and how they manage their personal/family roles as well as their entrepreneurial role.

This paper posits that women entrepreneurs need to adopt a balanced work-life in order to be successful entrepreneurs. The concept of ‘Work Life Balance’ (WLB) was introduced in 1986. It is the way to have a good balance between job and family matters (Reddy et al. 2010) and was first introduced to employees as one of the ways to improve their social life. Work-life balance helps them to negotiate their time of attendance to manage their personal demands, such as flexible time in working hours (Hornung, Rousseau, and Glaser 2008). Even though it has been introduced since 1986, the use of WLB is rarely practiced in the organization (Lockwood 2003). Report by Society for Human Resource Management revealed that W.K. Kellogg company has implemented WLB since early 1930’s, and prior to World War II, the W.K. Kellogg Company has instructed their staff to work four to six hour shifts to replace the traditional three daily eight-hour shifts which resulted in an increase of the employees’ morale and efficiency(Lockwood 2003). [17] However, the adoption of policies was related to work – family demands rather than family – work demand. [18]

Nowadays, women choose to enter the entrepreneurship because they need to decrease their life stress and thus applying WLB, but this is not for all women.

[19] revealed that spouse business were impact stressful to manage work – life balance than unmarried people. [20] In Filipina, women entrepreneurs who are applying WLB managed to reduce stress and increased in productivity. [21] stressed out that handling social challenges in French requires the practice of WLB concept. (Noor 1999) In Malaysia, business women are emotionally healthy when they have support from their husband and thus reducing the stress symptom. (Robinson, Magee, and Caputi 2016) However, business women in Philippines were facing health problem when they have long working hours. These findings support the effect of social relation towards job stress(O’Driscoll et al. 2003).

[22] However, women entrepreneur still need good education background to success in business. [25] In accordance to that, government should formulate the policies on giving more opportunities to women. [27] In fact, assisting women development in entrepreneurship will impact economic growth for long term performance. [32] Some scholars revealed that to success in business, the company need to understand the strategy of management practice and applying. Clearly, there is a need of more and better opportunities to influence women entrepreneurs in gaining equal access to management, encourage them to enter the business training and learning, joining financial skills and more publicity on radio and television to portray that they are deemed to be important for business success(Robinson, Magee, and Caputi 2016).

[26] [1]There are a lots of evidences that posits in applying WLB will improve business and affect the emotional health. Although work-life balance has been used in many organizations that attempt to improve well-being and enhance productivity in the workplace, it has not been extensively practice among female entrepreneurs. The purpose of this paper is to review the literature related to the challenges and benefits of practicing work-life balance among women entrepreneurs.

To do so, it is guided by two research questions: i) What are the benefits of practicing work-life balance among women entrepreneurs? and ii) What are the challenges of practicing work-life balance among women entrepreneurs. This paper is organized into four sections. The introduction presents a brief discussion of the population of women entrepreneurs, work – life balance and objective of research followed by the research methodology in the second section and the third section presents the result and discussion. The paper ends with a conclusion section.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper presents a review of literature related to the practice of WLB among women entrepreneurs. The presentations of this paper is based on a systematic approach to select and analyze the literature. Specifically, the selection and analysis of the literature are based on two main stages namely, the data selection and data analysis. The two phases are described in the following part of this section.

2.1 Data Selection

Phase 1: Selecting relevant literature

The first phase of the review is to select relevant literature guided by the two research questions. Initial

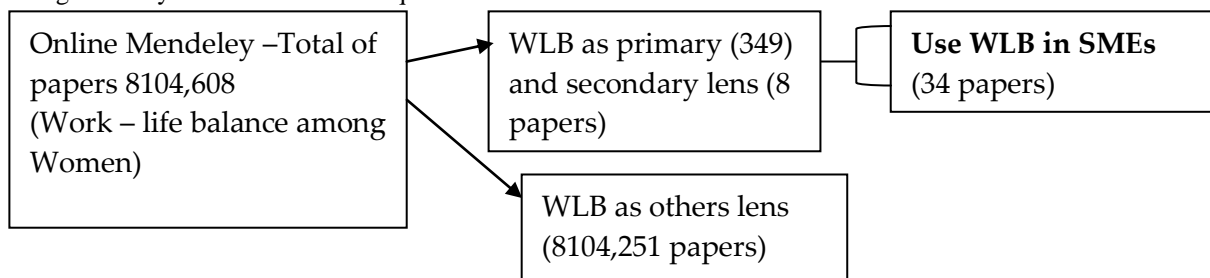


Figure 2: Search results based on online Mendeley tool

As a figure 2; due to the extensive number of papers found, we refined our search based on the recent year from 1999 to 2016. However, we proceeded by scanning the abstract and introduction of the papers. The focus of the screening was on the phrase “work-life balance” and “women entrepreneurs”. [29] We are investigated only for SMEs women which is, this company were contribution higher in the economy development.

The scanning of the abstract and introduction resulted in the acceptance 35 papers for the analysis, and one paper were excluded. The papers included in this analysis cover both the benefits of work – life balance and challenges. Based on analysis we found that 10 issues in the challenges items was serious item for women entrepreneurs faced in the real life. The issues such as; imbalance of time, difficult to manage WLB, personal demand, family-work conflict, work-family conflict, social life and difficult to finding client. All this items are influences of low in productivity and raise unhealthy impact in women health, also impact for unhappy families. However, the implementing on work – life balance were contribution of benefit as such; increase of dual earner, increase productivity ,well – being, job opportunity, health and life satisfaction.

Phase 2: Data Analysis and Reporting

searches for primary studies were undertaken using online database, which are Mendeley online, google scholar, ScienceDirect, Emerald, ACM Digital Library, researchgate and LinkedIn. Researchers also went through the references of each relevant articles to ensure that almost all relevant articles are included.

As shown in Figure 1, the search process resulted in a total of 8104,608 papers with used online Mendeley tool. The first level of selection criteria involve identifying papers that utilize Work – life balance (WLB) as a primary tool and secondary lens of investigation. For this purpose, we differentiated the studies into a) studies that WLB practices among women entrepreneurs as a primary lens of investigation and b) women development statistics as a secondary lens. The criterion was chosen based on the fact that purpose of this review is to investigate of work – life balance among women entrepreneurs. In this case, papers that use WLB to investigate other than the use of WLB among women entrepreneurs in SMEs were excluded. Specifically, the issue of work – life with engineering company, law company, gender (men), nursing, unmarried couples were excluded. As shown in figure 349 papers were found to practice WLB among women SMEs as primary data and 8 papers from secondary lens.

The review presented in this paper was drawn on 34 papers based on the two levels of selection described above. These papers were analyzed based on the research questions. Specifically, it focuses on the benefits and challenges of work-life balance among women entrepreneurs. The results of the analysis are presented below.

III. RESULTS & DISCUSSON

This section presents the findings of the literature review focusing on the benefits and challenges of implementing work-life balance as shown in Table 1. The rest of this section presents the discussion based on the research questions.

RQ1: What are the benefits of practicing work-life balance among female entrepreneurs?

Based on Table 1, there are six benefits documented by researchers relating to the practice of work-life balance, which are an increase in dual earner, enhance productivity, well-being, job opportunities, health and life satisfaction. Among the six benefits, the most common benefits cited by the literature is the increase in dual earner. While the lowest cited benefit is life satisfaction.

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As shown in Table 1, its contribution to the increase of dual earner is cited in 17 papers, followed by enhancing productivity cited by 16 papers and third cited is well – being issues (11 papers) followed by job opportunity (9 papers). While only seven papers stated the impact of

health. Benefit related to capable on life satisfaction needed for women was cited by 5 papers only. It can be concluded that work-life balance is strongly related to its contribution to family economy demands.

Author/Item	BENEFITS						CHALLENGES									
	Dual Earner	Well-Being	Life Satisfactio	Health	Productivit y	Job Opportunit	WFC	Stress	Imbalance	Poor Supportive	FWC	Gender	MLB	Social	Personal Demand	Difficult to Finding
[13]	√	√		√	√											
(3)	√		√					√								√
[29]	√															
[30]	√															
[21]	√	√	√	√								√	√			
[1]	√					√										
[31]	√															
[16]	√											√				
[17]								√		√		√				
[8]												√				
[5]	√	√		√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√		√		
[18]								√	√		√	√				√
[14]										√	√					
[4]	√	√	√	√	√				√	√	√		√	√	√	
[19]	√						√		√		√					
[20]	√	√	√				√	√								
[2]						√			√				√		√	
[6]		√		√												
[7]										√		√			√	
[9]		√			√											
[10]		√		√								√			√	
[11]		√	√		√	√			√			√			√	
[12]		√			√				√	√		√			√	
[12]	√				√				√	√		√			√	
[15]	√			√					√			√			√	
[22]											√					
[23]									√						√	
[24]					√	√		√	√	√		√				
[25]	√				√				√	√		√				
[26]	√	√			√	√	√		√							
[27]					√				√							
[28]					√	√										
[32]					√	√										
[33]					√	√										
[34]					√	√										
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Total	17	11	5	7	16	9	4	5	12	9	6	8	11	3	10	2

Table 1: Benefits and Challenges of Practicing Work-Life Balance

Increase of twin wage earner because the main conducive of labor – life balance in girls (Poroli 2014) mentioned that in western societies, girls were additional influenced on social identities associated with the non-public sphere such mother, wife, sister, or female offspring.

Therefore, girls were taking responsibility by specializing in unit, supporting the husband, etc. per (Wilson 2007) has pointed that ladies were stronger than

man to handle self – effectivity through by entrepreneurs’ intention. (Poroli 2014) pointed that the foremost challenges for girls entrepreneurs were social demands, however can't be generalized to all or any. Meanwhile, girls entrepreneurs in Sverige need civil rights as men (Sandberg 2003). the very fact still remains that ladies are selecting entrepreneurship field instead of the company world as a result of they need to own balance in career and private life (Appelbaum, Asham, and Argheyd 2011). (Davis 2012) explicit that ladies are enhance the in business are contributed in international economic. The balance between work and family is vital because it would enhance work and job satisfaction. Balance of the wants of the family may cause a cheerful family. As a result organizations and families to attain the specified level of satisfaction (Carlson, D., Grzywacz, j., & Zivnuska 2009).

This study are specializing in work – life balance of ladies entrepreneurs and the way WLB observe can have an effect on the performance in productivity. it might be most associated with manage time effectively with business and private life to manage stress to boost business productivity and convey happiness to the family, at constant time it'll scale back the pressure on the second - 2 sides. there have been six studies mentioned that job – life balance encourage well- being to girls entrepreneurs, personal, and family.

In summary, to advance the understanding of each directions of stress level and productivity performance for girls entrepreneurs in Asian nation with applying work – life balance concept, it is essential to develop and provide women entrepreneurs more training courses as foremost cited contribution of labor – life balance is to influence with work, family and individual to manage work-life balance within the work performance and family really matters. This analysis can aim for win – win scenario. In general, work – life balance implementing can contributions happiest operating setting through by leader, employee, personal life and family and fewer of absent within the geographical point and enhance health performance.

RQ2: What is the difficulty that women entrepreneurs have in determining SMEs performance challenges without work – life balance?

As shown in Table 1, 34 studies on the challenges of work – life balance have be identified. The main challenge cited in the literature are imbalance in life by 12 papers. Second, 11 papers have be identified in work –life balance requirement. It is followed by personal demand by 10 papers and poor support polices by 9 papers. The rest were on the issues of difficulties in finding customer (2 papers), social influenced (3 papers), work – family conflict (4 papers) and family – work conflict (6 papers). However, the challenges on gender and stress have equal number of studies (5 papers). Studies related to work – life balance challenges stated that imbalance to manage life is the major challenges since work – life balance existed. (Carlson, D., Grzywacz, j., & Zivnuska 2009) Mentioned that there are confirm WFC mediates are high relationship influences on stressors and psychosocial outcomes. In fact, of that there have lack to manage their time in their life. There are significate of major challenges as imbalance time. Second, the challenge in the work – life balance literature shows was not being practiced or not being understood. Then followed by the personal demand issue. The issue of poor support policies was the third challenge in the work – life balance studies.

However, difficulties in finding client was not a burden for women entrepreneurs. Thus, in order to ensure success in the business and life work – life balance implementation have been proposed, which included maintain the personal healthy life. However, presents some of the issues related to the acceptance of work – life balance. Hence, it is critical to give attention to women entrepreneurs to implement work – life balance in their daily routine because there have been busy women to manage dual task.

IV. CONCLUSION

The focus of this review is to investigate the existing literature related to the challenges of work – life balance and contribution to economy especially on women development. For this purpose, 34 articles have been selected to analysed. Based on the analysis, it was found that work – life balance contributes significantly in terms of improving well-being in the human life and enhance productivity in the workplace. There are conclude that practice of WLB will impact on win – win situation both with career success and family happiness. It were prove by this investigation that practising WLB will influence to enhance dual earner of family economy and for increasing productivity. Besides that, work – life balance also reduce work-family conflict, enhance health care. This area of research are focus on dual-income families continues to increase in developed Malaysia countries

However, from this review we are facing the major challenges to practice WLB which is difficult to manage time as well as a business women duties and mother in the family demand. Rather than, we also having the challenges to applying WLB because there are more focus to the business and the main purpose is to gain a lots of money.

Hence, a thorough understanding of the issues is especially paramount to those appropriate strategies and policy measures can be formulated through the concerted efforts of the many stakeholder – policymakers, (HEIs) entrepreneurs themselves, their peers and even family members to achieve the aim of increasing the number of Malaysia women in business to 35 percent by 2020.

For future research, it is suggested to investigate the influence of online technology on work – life balance and the productivity of women entrepreneurs in Malaysia. Based on this analysis, it was find that less emphasis was give on the ways to resolve the challenges. Although an extensive research was find in this field of study, studies that focus on work – life balance in Malaysia are very limited.

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