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TECHNIQUES ADOPTED IN RESOLVING ROLE CONFLICT OF WORKING WOMEN

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ABSTRACT: When role conflict situation prevails, two options are available before working women. They may either quit their job or reduce the role conflict by adopting coping strategies. Every working woman does not have the option of staying at home. It is, therefore, understood that the working women while conflict emerged, started to reconcile the two roles they play by adopting some techniques and measures also called as 'coping strategies'. Their readiness enables them to adopt themselves to the contradictory role demands. They adopt certain techniques and measures which mostly based on their understanding of the job and home roles, ability of time management, and availability of support in family and work place and the presence of personal qualities.

Key Words: Role conflict, Working women, Educated family, Husband, Children, Employer,

I. INTRODUCTION

Role conflict is an outcome of conflicts in number of roles performed by an individual. A woman performing multiple role has to, quite often face work – family conflict because time and energy are shared. For the employers such role conflict means disenchantment, dissatisfaction and strained relations with women employees, their lower standard of work performance and disregard of organisation goals. Each role within the family and work environment imposes demands requiring time, energy and commitment. Married working women are faced with problems in performing different roles such as wife, mother home maker and employee roles. The major role problem a woman faces is the conflict arising from multiple roles.

In the present study also, an attempt is made to know the techniques adopted by the

respondents to avoid / reduce role conflict they faced. Based on the reviews and interaction with respondents, seven most techniques adopted by them were identified. They were given to respondents to find their order of preference. Mean, standard deviation and cumulative variance scores were calculated on the responses received from them. Based on the CV percentage they are arranged in an ascending order and thus their effectiveness is measured from 'most' to 'least'. The results of analysis is presented under this section for respondent – sales women, teachers and nurses separately.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Paterson (1978) confirmed that the job taken by women created more conflicting situations for them due to dual role played and inability to tolerate the whole burden.
- Gilbert (1975) reported the women who assumed home roles (eg: Wife, mother and a home maker) and non-home roles (eg: employee) frequently experienced conflict between competing role demands. Conflicts were considered likely when women perceived their home and job roles as highly desirable but mutually exclusive.
- Gutek et.al (1981) found that the inter-role conflict is likely to increase as the demands of either the work role or family role increases similarly, inter – role conflict can increase as one's obligation to the family expand through marriage and the arrival of children.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the techniques adopted by working women to avoid role conflict.



- to study the role of supporters in resolving role conflicts of working women.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To address the research objective suitable data collection tools were used to ensure data collected. This study employed in – depth personal interview using well structured and tested interview schedules to collect primary data from the respondents women employees. Besides, open and close ended questions to elicit information on nature, sources, consequences of role any of women employees, and on coping strategies adopted and on the role of family members, colleagues and employer in resolve the role conflict, statements were used. The Responses on statements were collected on 5 point Likert Scales. Books, numerous research journals, research projects and theses, news papers, reports of government and non-government organisations (NGO's) and websites were referred for collecting secondary data. The present study is both descriptive and analytical in its content and based on both primary and secondary data. Sample survey method was employed to collect the required primary data.

V. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Role conflict happens when there are contradictions between different roles that a person takes on or plays in their everyday life. In some cases, the conflict is a result of opposing obligations which results in a conflict of interest, in others, when a person has roles that have different statuses, and it also occurs when people disagree about what the responsibilities for a particular role should be, whether in the personal or professional realms. The following tables depict the techniques adopted by the respondents to settle role conflict.

Table -1
Techniques Adopted By Saleswomen to Avoid Role conflict

S.No	Techniques Adopted	Mean	SD	CV	Rank
1.	Educating family about my job conditions.	3.49	0.72	20.59	1
2.	Ensuring expectations of family members met in time.	3.88	0.82	21.13	2
3.	Always using time saving devices.	3.47	0.77	22.08	3
4.	Convincing family members to help in domestic work.	3.32	0.88	26.49	4
5.	Convincing family members that I am working for their welfare.	3.50	1.06	30.36	5
6.	Never allowed any issue remained unresolved for long time.	3.54	1.09	30.82	6
7.	Making leisure time/ holidays memorable for family members.	3.34	1.22	36.44	7

It is known from Table – 1 that the respondent – saleswomen adopted multiple techniques to avoid role conflicts emerged due to their dual role.

Among the most seven techniques adopted by them, the top three seemed to be more effective in their opinion as they yielded fruitful results in reducing role conflict. They are such as, 'educating family about my job conditions', 'ensuring expectations of family members met in time', and 'always using time saving devices' which secured first, second and third rank respectively. The remaining techniques were also used by respondents but they seemed to be less effective.

Table – 2
Techniques Adopted By Teachers to Avoid Role Conflict

S.No	Techniques Adopted	Mean	SD	CV	Rank
1.	Convincing family members that I am working for their welfare.	2.55	0.67	26.29	1
2.	Making leisure time / holidays memorable for family members.	2.55	0.71	27.81	2
3.	Ensuring expectations of family members met in time.	2.61	0.76	29.35	3
4.	Educating family about my job conditions.	2.93	0.98	33.38	4
5.	Never allowed any issue remained unresolved for long time.	2.87	0.98	34.21	5
6.	Always using time saving devices.	2.69	1.12	41.52	6
7.	Convincing family members to help in domestic work.	3.14	1.31	41.66	7

It is known from Table – 2 that the respondent – teachers adopted multiple techniques to avoid / reduce role conflicts emerged due to their dual role.

Among the most seven techniques adopted by them, the top three seemed to be more effective in their opinion as they yielded fruitful results in resolving role conflict. They are such as, 'convincing family members that I am working for their welfare', 'making leisure time / holidays memorable for family members', and 'ensuring expectations of family members met in time', which secured first, second and third rank respectively. The remaining techniques though adopted by respondents but they seemed to be less effective.

Table – 3
Techniques Adopted By Nurses to Avoid Role Conflict

S.No	Techniques Adopted	Mean	SD	CV	Rank
1.	Educating family about my job conditions.	2.70	0.72	26.61	1
2.	Convincing family members that I am working for their welfare.	2.91	0.82	28.13	2
3.	Never allowed any issue remained unresolved for long time.	2.22	0.98	44.10	3



4.	Always using time saving devices.	2.99	1.40	46.75	4
5.	Making leisure time / holidays memorable for family members.	2.92	1.39	47.58	5
6.	Convincing family members to help in domestic work.	2.50	1.20	47.93	6
7.	Ensuring expectations of family members met in time.	2.82	1.36	48.09	7

It is known from Table – 3 that the respondent – nurses used multiple techniques to avoid their role conflicts.

Among the seven most techniques used by them, the top three seemed to be more effective in their opinion as they yielded fruitful results in reducing their role conflicts. They are such as ‘educating family about my job conditions’, ‘convincing family members that I am working for their welfare’, and ‘never allowed any issue remained unresolved for long time’, which secured first, second and third rank respectively. The remaining techniques were also used by them but they seemed to be less effective.

In the order of preference of techniques used by respondent – saleswomen, teachers and nurses, the two most techniques such as ‘educating family about my job conditions’, and ‘ensuring expectations of family members met in time’, seemed to be widely used and effective as they were mostly endorsed by a majority of working women.

Table – 4
Role of Parents in Resolving Role Conflicts of Saleswomen

S.No	Role of Parents	Mean	SD	CV	Rank
1.	Taking care of children.	3.33	0.91	24.47	1
2.	Timely advice on family matters.	3.11	0.96	30.80	2
3.	Helpful in domestic work.	3.05	1.00	32.60	3
4.	Helpful in convincing husband and in-laws.	3.38	1.16	34.29	4
5.	Extending financial help.	3.40	1.19	34.96	5

The role of parents in resolving role conflicts of saleswomen is shown from Table – 4. Respondents opened that ‘taking care of children’ [CV score 24.47] was the foremost help extended by parents while facing role conflicts. It stood at first rank in their order of preference. It is followed by, ‘timely advice on family matters’ (CV score 30.80) and ‘helpful in domestic work’ (CV score 32.60) which secured seemed ‘second’ and ‘third’ rank respectively. The parents extended two more type of support like ‘helpful in convincing husband and in-laws’ and ‘extending financial help’, but they did not find much favour among saleswomen as they were ranked ‘fourth’ and ‘fifth’ in the preference.

Table – 5
Role of Husband in Resolving Role Conflicts of Saleswomen

S.No	Role of Parents	Mean	SD	CV	Rank
1.	Taking care of transport to and fro of office.	3.33	0.91	27.47	1
2.	Looking after the needs of children.	3.20	0.94	29.38	2
3.	Sharing domestic work.	3.37	1.15	34.11	3
4.	Helpful in easing stress and strain.	2.84	1.12	39.31	4
5.	No feeling of not being attended always	3.01	1.21	40.08	5

The role of husband in resolving role conflict of saleswomen is shown from Table – 5. Respondents opined that ‘Taking care of transport to and fro of office’ was the foremost help extended by husband while facing role conflict. It has stood at first rank in their order of preference. It is followed by ‘looking after the needs of children’, and ‘sharing domestic work’, which secured ‘second’ and ‘third’ rank in the order. The husband had extended two more type of support like ‘helpful in easing stress and strain’ and ‘no feeling of not being attended always’, but they did not seem to have much favour among saleswomen as they were ranked ‘fourth’ and ‘fifth’ in the order.

VI. FINDINGS

- It is found that the most three techniques adopted by saleswomen to reduce role conflicts were, 1. Educating family about my job conditions, 2. Ensuring expectations of family members met in time and 3. Always using time saving devices.
- It is found that the most three techniques adopted by teachers to reduce their conflicts were, 1. Convincing family members that I am working for their welfare. 2. Making leisure time / holidays memorable for family members, and 3. Ensuring expectations of family members met in time.
- It is found that the most three techniques adopted by nurses to reduce their role conflicts were, 1. Educating family members about my job conditions. 2. Convincing family members that I am working for their welfare, and 3. Never allowed any issue remained unresolved for long time.
- It is finally concluded that the three techniques which were used by a majority of working women were, 1. Education family members about my job conditions.



2. Convincing family members that I am working for their welfare, and 3. Ensuring expectations of family members met in time.

- It is revealed that a majority of parents extended their support in the form of 'timely advice on family matters', and 'taking care of children' while their working daughters facing role conflicts.
- It is revealed that a majority of husbands extended their support in the form of 'taking care of transport to and fro of office' and 'looking after the needs of children', while their spouses facing difficulty of role conflicts.

VII. SUGGESTIONS

The inability of women employees to withstand the strain of work both at home and at work place being the major root cause for their role conflicts, it is suggested in this regard that

- -that have to work within a strict time schedule and arrange things more systematically.
- -they have to set priorities among and within roles being sure that certain demands are always met (for example, the needs of sick children) while others may have lower priority (such as cleaning the house).
- -they have to come out of the feeling that they are neglecting wifely and motherly duties by comparing with non-working women.
- -they have to use time saving devices in the kitchen and make proper conveyance facilities to reach work place.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The present study finally underlies that resolving role conflict largely relies on the adaptability of working women and sensitization of family members, sub-ordinates and employ of women's job. The condition of the study in understanding the role conflicts of women working in formal sector is significant and relevant in the present day context. However, simply knowing is not enough and the present study highlights the need for human relation approach all around concerning with 'what' can be done to prevent or resolve the role conflicts among working women.

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