

**A Study on Lived Experience of Career and Personal Life Balance
of Married Working Mothers; the Case of Ethiopian Commodity
Exchange Authority Employees**

Frehiwot Alemu

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College of Developmental Studies
Center for Gender Studies**

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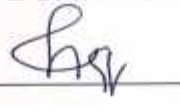
Frehiwot Alemu

Name of Student



Signature

APPROVED BY BOARD OF THE EXAMINERS


Hanna Tegegn 

Advisor

Signature

13/08/2019

Date


Abanesh Jimaneh 

Internal Examiner

Signature

July 2019

Date

Hirut Terefe 

External Examiner

Signature

2/8/2019

Date

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and that all sources of information used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Frehiwot Alemu

Name of Student

Signature

Place and Date of Submission: Addis Ababa University June, 2019

**This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a
University advisor.**

Name:

Signature:

Date:

_____ June, 2019 _____

ABSTRACT

This study tries to understand Lived Experience of Career and Personal Life Balance of Married Working Mothers; the Case of ECEA Employees. The aim of the study is to examine how married working mothers balance their triple role of being wife, mother and employed worker.

Qualitative study, using a semi-structured interview guide and FGD was employed in gathering the data. Eleven married working mothers were interviewed. Ten FGD members were discussed and thematic analysis was used to analyze the data.

Finding from the study clarifies working mothers have their own definition of work life balance which differs from one another, they face challenges like, lack of consistent support, lack of consistent home maid, economic difficulty, work load, no nearby day care long transportation and gender role. Working mothers also face stress that comes from the guilt of leaving their children with house maid, from load of responsibilities and expectations, they have developed their own coping mechanism to help themselves cope up with their situation. It is also found that being married and having children don't affect work promotion but some said that it has negative effect. These mothers perceive themselves as strong committed and selfless for their family. It is also found that married working mothers manage to attain work life balance with the help of others like family mother sister or house maid.

Key words: *work life balance, challenging gender role, support system, married working mothers.*

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Acronyms

CSA- Central Statistical Agency

ECEA- Ethiopian Commodity Exchange Authority

EDHS -Ethiopian Demographic Health Survey

HRM- Human Resource Managers

UN -United Nations

WLB-Work Life Balance

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1. Background

In Ethiopia comparing the employment status of women across different marital status and age groups in 2011, the proportion of women employed rises among women aged 15 to 19 to a peak among women aged 25 to 29, and then declines slightly for the older age groups. (UN women, 2014). With regards to differences by marital status, the EDHS indicate that women who are divorced, separated, or widowed are most likely to be employed. Women made up 35 percent of the administrative and 47 percent of custodian and manual jobs in 2012/13, essentially unchanged from the preceding two years. (UN women, 2014)

As indicated in EDHS (2016), among married women, the percentage employed was 32% in the 2005 EDHS. This increased moderately to 57% in the 2011 EDHS, and then declined slightly to 48% in the EDHS. The percentage of employed married women who receive cash earnings increased from 27% 2005 to 36% in 2011, and then remained essentially stable at 35% in 2016. The percentage of married women not paid for their work declined from 60% to 30% between 2005 and 2011 and then increased to 49% in 2016. (CSA, 2016, p.256)

The report of UN women(2014) shows, significant increment of employment in urban areas among women, who were never married and have no children, in sales and service sector. Moreover, the report of CSA(2016) also indicates that women who are divorced, separated, or widowed are most likely to be employed. As married mothers are part of productive force of the country the researcher seeks to identify the lived experience of married working mothers who are employed in formal sector to identify the success, challenges and the strategies they use to balance their personal life with their career life.

The study will be conducted on Ethiopian Commodity Exchange Authority married working mother employees. The organization is established based on proclamation number of 555/1991 with the objective of forming modern marketing system and protecting the rights of the community and creating awareness about modern production and advertisement.

1.2.Statement of the problem

Married working mothers play triple roles of being a wife, a mother and employed worker. Dealing with those roles every day has its own conflicting demands as it is performed by one individual. Study finding by Iyer(2017), showed that married women bargain to balance their work and personal life regardless of the segment they are into like the age group they belong to, the number of children they have and their spouses' profession. Besides, as soon as a woman attains the status of mother she involves in additional responsibility. Out of the two parents, the mother's role is greater and more significant. She is the preserver of the cultural traditions 'and socializer of young generation and teaches traditional values and norms to the young generation. Apart from these she also plays a role in the development of the emotional psychology of the child (Menaghan, 1990) in addition to this, the choices mothers continue to make with regard to their professional life are also profoundly shaped by longstanding attitudes towards what constitutes correct 'behavior for women. (Sundersan, 2014)

A study by Fagnani (2012) adds on individual and contextual factors that make it difficult to combine a job and family life. Among the most important are workplace cultures that define ideal workers in ways that conflict with ideal mother norms, wider societal norms while supporting maternal employment also reflect assumptions about mothers as the main care takers, high childcare costs and low level of availability of formal and good quality childcare arrangements, family-unfriendly patterns of work schedules, large number of working hours and low degree of command over the scheduling of one's work hours and long time spent on commuting are mentioned.

Studies have been done in working mothers particularly in America. Among the issues that have been presented are; maternal employment and time with children, mothers' work life experiences, work-life integration, experiences of children of working parents and, work and family leisure. In recent study by Sundersan (2014) about work life balance of working mothers found factors affecting work life balance such as, burden of excessive work, interference of work with family life, fulfill others' expectations, longer work hours and no time for one self. the study also listed consequence of poor work life

balance faced by working mother like, high levels of stress and anxiety, job burnout and inability to realize full potential are mentioned.

Some research work has been done around motherhood and working mothers in Africa for example Quaye (2011), in Ghana studied the everyday life experiences of working mothers and their children. The finding of the study revealed that major challenge working mothers face is related to family life that has to do with the amount of time they spend with their children which was reduced because of their work.

The researcher has reviewed comparative studies on working and non-working mothers working and nonworking women's descriptions and experiences of their roles in society (Amin, 2012). There is also a study in Ethiopia on work life balance (Meskerem, 2017), but it only focused on the effect of work life balance on organizational commitment of employees. To the best of the knowledge of the researcher there is not much research done looking at the life experience of married working women in Ethiopia. So the researcher intends to examine evidences in the lived experience of married working mothers who chose to work while they are playing a role of mother and wife.

Research findings that are reviewed by the researcher fail to see the strength of working mothers and mostly focuses on the challenges faced by them (Lauren, 2015; kumari, 2014; Barati, Ollah and Sadat n.d). Thus, the challenges faced by married working mothers in Ethiopian context will be looked at, the researcher seeks to identify the strength perspective from the lived experience of married working mothers How these women balanced their triple role and career besides performing expected traditional roles of women.

Research questions

This study focused on the research questions listed below to give answers to the stated significance of the study

1. What are the stressing factors for working mother?
2. What helped do they rely on to balance career and traditional role?
3. What is their coping mechanism to balance career and family life?
4. How do educated and married working mother challenge gender role?

5. What is the effect of being married working mother on work promotion?

1.3.Objectives

1.3.1.General objective

- To examine how married working mothers, balance their triple role of being wife, mother and employed worker.

1.3.2.Specific objectives

- To identify how married working mothers define work life balance.
- To explore what help married working mother relay on to achieving career/life balance.
- To identify how married working mothers perceive themselves.
- To identify what challenges married working mothers encounter in balancing career and personal life.
- To identify what coping mechanisms married working mothers use to balance career and family life.

1.4.Significance of the study

The significance of this study is to come up with an in-depth understanding of the triple role of women. The study is conducted to have a better understanding of women playing the role of a wife, mother, and employee. Finding from this study will be an input to the knowledge of the strength and to the challenges married working women face to balance their career with the mentioned roles.

Furthermore results from this study will give an insight about how it is possible for women to be married working mother to inspire other women who have the same opportunity but left behind because of the challenges and it will increase awareness for office administrations about the difficulties married working mothers go through to balance their career and personal life. Therefore, office administrations will be more flexible for married working mothers. It also has significant contribution for policy makers and academicians. Furthermore, this study will identify useful coping mechanisms to balance career and personal life from the lived experience of married working mothers who maintained their role, while accomplishing family responsibilities

and be productive at the workplace too. In addition, the finding of this study will add knowledge to the strategies to balance family duties and career from women who have succeeded, and it also stimulates further study on the issue

1.5.Limitation of the study

The first limitation of the study is that the researcher interviewed only working mothers not working fathers or not the spouses of this working mothers thus, the information about the spouses is gained only from the mothers. Second, the researcher used small number of participant and specificity of the organization makes it difficult to generalize the finding. Third some employees were not willing to disclose their personal or family matters which could not be assessed in recorded data and information. So, the investigator has determined the result with the available data. Fourth, Contradiction in the answers of respondents is also another constraint. And for certainty purposes some statements are repeated in the interview guide and the part of inconsistency is removed.

1.6.Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is categorized in five chapters. Including the first chapter. The second chapter deals with the review of related literature and the theoretical framework of the thesis. The third chapter designates the method, approach and all methodological parts that are used to conduct this study. The fourth chapter describes the findings of the study categorizing under 6 major themes analyses and discusses the major findings Based on literatures. Fifthchapterconcludes the findings of the study and forward recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITRATURE and THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Theoretical frame work

In this thesis, the investigator use theoretical frameworks knowledgeable by foundational Feminist theories about motherhood studies and second-wave feminism within a theoretical context.

2.1.1. Feminist Theory and Motherhood.

To begin with profound theories written about motherhood, Sara Ruddick's 1989 *Maternal Thinking* is the first feminist study of mothering as experience. It begins from the philosophical ground that all practice and experience including daily acts of care performed by mothers gives rise to certain and different ways of thinking. The text persuasively tells a philosophy of mothering, with its diverse ways of thinking about the world. In her study, Ruddick theorizes about maternal control, maternal and child vulnerability, the concept of "nature" with respect to motherhood, along with a typical way of lively maternal care.

Ruddick systematically links maternal thinking as an "engaged and visionary standpoint "with a larger social dimension and a politics of peace and with the central feminist goal: to make the personal (the private) political. (Takševa, 2017) In which her theories guide this research by investigating the private and subjective experience of married working mothers to contribute for the information for policy and administrative powers. Ruddick's philosophy of maternal thinking essential contributions for the subsequent and ongoing development of the theory of motherhood in her theory she separates the biological acts of giving birth from the activity of mothering, this definition frees maternal care activities to be well performed by anyone, such as other mothers, adoptive mothers, and fathers. This theory guides my study by indicating that childcare activities that needs only mothers involvement in every way should be challenged

Recent scholarship in motherhood studies has differentiated between culturally specific forms of mothering and their suggestions for what constitutes empowerment for each group of

mothers (Gonsalves and Sangha 2013; O'Reilly, 2014; Anderson, 2016 and Tait Neufeld and Cidro, 2017). Investigated about the conditions that make motherhood an oppressive patriarchal structure in the dominant culture such as mothering in the boundaries of a private, nuclear family household where the mother has almost total responsibility for child rearing, frequently assumed economic dependence on men and strict sex-role segregation. Yet, they also point out that these conditions are not constitutive of many different forms of mothering outside the dominant culture, especially African American or Indigenous mothering.

Mothering, namely the lived experience of being a mother, “is not a singular practice” because even among similar mothers practices vary significantly” (Chandler,2007). If mothering practices vary significantly even among mothers who are in some logic similar, and if practices do give rise to and shape the experience of mothering, then the experiences of mothering do vary significantly and result in different forms of identity and levels of agency that negotiate, critique, and resist patriarchal constraints in different ways. Just as the category of woman is not universal. (Takševa, 2017)

2.2. Work life Balance Perspectives

To start with the importance of understanding the term work-life balance and how it is defined, there is not consistent, certain and reliable definition of work-life balance. And balance has not been suitably defined in the literature (Greenhaus, Collins, & Shaw, 2003). Work-life balance does not occur by completing tasks related to one's various roles but being meaningfully involved in each of the various roles (APA, 2004). Work-life balance is not mere related to work and life; it is the positive state of mind. In this case, work-life balance exists when a person is satisfied with his or her level of functioning in all domains of life (i.e., work, family, leisure) (Kalliath&Brough, 2008). Work-life balance, in its broadest sense, is defined as a satisfactory level of involvement or ‘fit’ between the multiple roles in a person's life (Hudson, 2005). Work-life balance is about the interaction between paid work and other activities, including unpaid work in families and community, leisure and personal development.

Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw (2003) defined work-family balance as “the extent to which an individual is respectively–self-involved and equally satisfied with –his or her work role and family role”. Work-life balance does not mean an equal balance in units of time

between work and life. But, it is about proper understanding of the priorities of the professional and personal level. The core of an effective Work-Life Balance definition are two key everyday concepts that are relevant, they are daily achievement and enjoyment. These terms are the two sides of a coin value in life. One can't have the other without the other (kanthisree, 2013)

Recent study by Iyer(2017) measured the work–life balance of women and the finding revealed that married women find it very hard to balance their work and personal life irrespective of the sector they are into, the age group they belong to, the number of children they have and their spouse's profession. The study also indicated that most of the women (52%) have colleagues who have resigned or taken a career break because of work life balance issues. (28%) work overtime frequently. (48%) spend 4 to 6 hours with their children/partner. (44%) have job stress that affects their personal relationships. (42%) have work that affects their house-hold activities. And from 22 private employees, only 15 of them feel that they are able to balance their professional and personal life.

Another study conducted by Care (2012) found that 1,000 working mothers surveyed across the US loved a career in besides raising their children. 64% of women said that work had no problem on their capability to be a good mother and 50% said that they felt that having a career made them a good role model for their children. Furthermore, from 10 mother 8 of them replied that they enjoyed being a parent who worked

Similarly study by Whitehead (2003) about career and life balance of professional women in South Africa indicated that professional women experienced pressures and challenges, irrespective of cultural background, in their determinations to balance their multiple roles. In the study 24 women were interviewed and fifteen indicated that they did experience life-balance, and nine indicated they did not. Several themes relating to the phenomenon of life-balance emerged from the data analysis. In the study according to the participants' responses, the experience of life balance seems to be indefinable and ever changing for professional women.

A definition of life-balance for professional women different experiences of life-balance are evident, and what represents life-balance to one person is not

necessarily applicable to another. as indicated by participants Lack of life balance will lead to health problem and well-being issues like less serious conditions, such as insomnia, fatigue, regular 'flu and colds, as well as more serious conditions, such as panic attacks, depression and cancer.(p,79.)

Whitehead found that unbalance in work and personal life cannot be the same for all working mothers because of different experience. She also found that lack of life balance is something that brings problem on the wellbeing of working mothers.

2.3. Causes of Work Life Imbalance

There are three moderators that are correlated with work–life imbalance: gender, time spent at work, and family characteristics. Ford et al., (2007) **Gender** differences could lead to a work life imbalance due to the distinct perception of role identity. It has been demonstrated that men prioritize their work duties over their family duties to provide financial support for their families, whereas women prioritize their family life.Cinamon, et al (2002). **Spending long hours** at work due to "inflexibility, shifting in work requirements, overtime or evening work duties" could lead to an imbalance between work and family duties.(Byron and Kristin 2005).It has been demonstrated "that time spent at work positively correlate with both work interfering with family and family interference with work. This could be due to the fact that satisfaction is a subjective measure. This being said, long hours could be interpreted positively or negatively depending on the individuals. Ford et al., (2007).According to Ford et al., (2007) **Family characteristics** include single employers, married or cohabiting employers, parent employers, and dual-earning parents. Parent workers value family-oriented activities; thus, working long hours reduces their ability to fulfill this identity, and, in return, reduces family satisfaction.

2.4. Role conflict

Ginnett (2019) defines role conflict categorizing in three the first is Intra senderrole conflict when the individual is getting contradictory messages or expectations about his or her behavior, he or she is experiencing role conflict. These conflicts can come from several different sources. The second is Inter role conflict is when the conflict is between two different roles held by the same person. The third person/role conflict it happens when the situation where the expectations of a role violate the role occupant's personal expectations or values. It can also develop as the expected role migrates from initial expectations.

2.5. Triple role

Traditionally, women have been seen as nurturers and care givers and given all roles related to preserving and handling family issue. Men perceive themselves as breadwinners and society also expects them to achieve work roles to earn and support the family. Yet, the nature of work-force has been changing and the percentage of men as wage earners and women as housewives has been rapidly declining.(Sundaresan, 2015) role demands of work and family are in particular consuming women. A conceivable reason for this is that for some mothers, being a working mother helps them maintain their identity, their independence, self-worth and self-esteem as a woman, outside of the family home. But remaining in work and becoming a working mother can be a challenge, where women feel frustrated and exhausted. (Whelan, 2014)

Virtually, every culture and society around the planet, women have the primary responsibility for child care. Although alternatives for breast-feeding exist today, historically it has only been the woman who has been able to nurse the child (selam press, 2011) Housework is still considered the woman's domain. Working women shoulder additional responsibility of the work place as well as at their domestic front. (Monogr, 2009)In the second half of the 20th century, and consequent women's rising education levels in developed and developing nations, women and mothers particularly sought opportunities to combine paid work with motherhood. (O'Reill, 2010).

In order to be a good mother, the woman had to split her identity into three different pieces: the identity of the wife, the identity of the mother and the identity of the woman as an individual. So, married working mother struggle to fill up all this identity. The woman perceives motherhood as an deliberate change from the individual woman with selfish needs to a woman with three identities; the individual woman; the wife; and the mother; and she seek to meet the requirements from all three identities (Nellemann, 2010, p.41).

The finding of Nellemann indicated that married working mother struggle to fulfill the I identity of wife and mother beside her career this change from individual women to those three identities exists when a women is married and have children.

A study on working and nonworking women's descriptions and experiences of their roles in Society in Pakistan (Amin, 2012) showed that the participants identified three main roles of women in a society. These roles are familial, financial supporter, and socio-political roles. Women's experiences and feelings related to these roles had an impact on their quality of life. Relatively an older study by Whitehead, (2003) identified that,

Roles performed by professional women Participants identified seven roles expected of them, including worker, mother, wife, housekeeper, family member (sister, child), community member, and friend. In this study findings from the interviews and focus group discussion indicated that all participants were aware of the above roles, but viewed the importance of various roles differently, and therefore spent different amounts of time on them. The importance of a role and the time spent on it were closely linked to the life-priorities and life-stage of a participant. (p,79.)

This finding show that regardless of many roles performed by working mothers, setting priorities for all roles and giving more time to the most important one will determine the level of work life balance working mothers attain.

2.6. Challenges

Managing a family whereas raising young children while both partners are employed is challenging and stressful. Harmonizing one's work responsibilities and desires with one's responsibilities and interests other than work is more challenging.(kanthisree,2013)nurturing a child has took the biggest challenge to the working mothers. The problem starts with pre-school care when the mother leaves the baby with a family member or a maid, or puts him/her in a playschool (Sun, 2013) Warner et al., (as cited by Quaye, 2011) indicated that married women differ from unmarried women not only in terms of residence but also in terms of their social and economic roles both within their household and within the larger society. Becoming a „good“ mother included, accepting that a child changes the women's daily lives (Nellemann, 2010). Women often find it more difficult to maintain balance on account of the competing pressures of work and demands at home. Working women have to

carefully handle their personal balance and skillfully balance their roles, so as to enhance their potential in all quadrants of life. (Sundaresan, 2015)

A study about the challenges and problems faced by women workers in India by, Barati, Ollah R. and Sadat S. (n.d). Identified factors that are preventing women employees from aspiring for higher post and challenges and problems faced by women workers. They found eight major factors such as psychological harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination at workplace, no safety of working women while traveling, lack of family support, insufficient maternity leaves, job insecurity and workplace adjustment are mentioned. Stress loads can be quite high amongst working mothers and these may often reflect in their relationships at home. Working mothers are stressed to reach work on time, to send her child to school and to reach all the children's deadlines on time including food and dress, and she is also pressed for time to look after her home simultaneously.

2.7. Support and child care

Mothers often carry parenting burdens with precious little assistance. Differences exist along racial ethnic lines in mothers' reliance on family and friends for childrearing assistance. African American mothers rely more on extended family for assistance with child care, and Anglo mothers rely more on neighbors and friends (Arendell, 2000). Data suggest that when women work for pay, the amount of time they spend on care (in absolute terms and relative to men) is lower, but the reduction is not proportionate to the amount of time they spend at work.(Samman et al., 2016) thus, Aside from the significance of a mother figure in relation to emotional needs, mothers are important for some of the participating mothers for very practical reasons (Marie, 2011).

Unlike in the good old joint families, the absence of elderly presence in the modern nuclear families leaves the working mother with no option but to leave the child in a day care centers. Here comes the role of a crèche or play school to substitute the tender care of home for a blooming child much to the relief of young working mothers. (Linda, 2012)Some mothers hire servants to look after their children. Baby sitters are usually paid to watch, to play with the baby and to care for the children. But the purpose

would be served only if the children received their sitter's complete attention. (Sun, 2013) In Asian countries, and in many joint family systems, grandparents and other nonworking family members fulfill the need for childcare—they take over the job of childcare when the mother is at work. This very important benefit (of readily available child support from the family members themselves) in joint families not only recognizes that the working mother is an important member of the family, but also provides her the necessary support to be able to perform her dual role efficiently. (Linda, 2012)

Similarly, in another study in Ghana (Quaye, 2011) most families would like to follow their cultural values and Practices which is sticking to their families. Additionally, a study about an intersectional perspective on parenting values among black married couples in the United States by (Cross-Barnet, & Bell McDonald, 2015) revealed that several African women regretted that there were no relatives living nearby to help with childcare, and not having family-based care drove working African mothers to want to stay home to initiate appropriate values. In the study,

Most parents expressed a preference for family members providing childcare when it was needed, and many parents interviewed in the study did use daycare centers or aftercare at their child's school. But many of the respondents appeared neutral toward daycare even if they did not use it and discussed the downsides in terms of cost. (p,865).

This shows that the preference of family members for child care is not only for their provision of safe care for children. But it is mostly unpaid and has no economic difficulty. For this reason, they would want to use their parents more when it comes to child care. Therefore, with no childcare options available, there is often instability between women's reproductive work and their engagement in the labor market. The demands of children can limit women's opportunity to work outside the home the evidence suggests that where childcare is available, women's labor force participation is higher. (Samman et al., 2016).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this part the researcher discussed methodology of the research which is design of the study, the selection of participant, appropriate tools and techniques to collect relevant data, method of analysis, ethical consideration and eligibility criteria.

3.1. Research Design

For this study qualitative research method is used. Descriptive Phenomenological Research Design is applied to explore the accomplishments and challenges of women who are married and have children through in-depth conversational interview.

The purpose of the phenomenological approach is to illuminate the specific, to identify phenomena through how they are perceived by the actors in a situation. It is also concerned with the study of experience from the perspective of the individual, assumptions and usual ways of perceiving. Epistemologically, phenomenological approaches are based on a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity and emphasize the importance of personal perspective and interpretation. (Lester, S., 1999) This method provides a good way to describe the lived experience of married working mother in deep, holistic and more comprehensive way.

3.2. Study area

This study is conducted at Ethiopian Commodity Exchange Authority, Addis Ababa Ethiopia. I have selected this organization because I had the chance to communicate with the gender office department and had the chance to be informed that there are many working mothers in the organization. I also discussed with the gender officer to be my gate keeper to help me get an access to the organization and the staff who were participants of the study.

The organization has 131 staff members among the total staffs 44 of them or (30%) are female and from the 44 female employees, 30 of them hold bachelors' degree and above.

The study addressed the lived experience of WLB among married working mothers beside their traditional responsibilities.

3.3. Selection of Respondents

Participants for this research are from an exclusive population. For this reason, as indicated above only women who are married to the father of their children and have a child between the ages of five months to 12 years old and have bachelor's degree were included. Among 30 women employees who holds bachelor's degree and above, about 20 of them are married and have children.

3.4. Sampling frame

For this study the investigator took 11 women who are married and have at least one child, have at least Bachelor's degree or above. 11 women are selected because they can represent the amount of married working women in the organization. Purposive sampling approach is used to recruit participants for the study. This is because woman who are married to the father of their children and have a child between the ages of five months to 12 years old and have bachelor's degree are selected. Key informants were managers, colleagues and the HRM stuffs.

3.5. Eligibility criteria

The inclusion criterion for this study is based on the following.

- Mothers of young children married to the father of their children.
- Employed Women who work at least five days per week, have continued work after giving birth, and have passed a certain period at work after they gave birth, this is in order to be sure that the respondents are familiar with the routine of a working mother.
- Women who have at least one child between the age of five months and twelve years old. It is because children are categorized starting from birth totwelve years. and
- Women with at least a bachelor's degree is interviewed about how they succeeded to be a wife, a mother and an active part of the waged labor force. This is because, the researcher seeks to explore the success of educated women existed in the research area and mostly the organization also employs educated personals.

3.6. Data collection tool

Interview: is an important data collection tool used in qualitative research design. The types of qualitative interviews are structured, unstructured or semi-structured interviews and group interviews (ibid). According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), an in-depth interview tries to understand the world from the subjects' point of view. The in-depth interview also gives details of the meaning of participant's experiences and also uncovers their lived world experience (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Thus, the investigator decided to use interview to better understand the experiences of married working mother's in ECEA. This would be understood by how the respondents describe and make meaning of their experience as married working mother. The interview is conducted in Amharic language. The interview question was transcribed to Amharic language.

The researcher conducted an in-depth interview with eleven married working mothers two of their managers and three colleagues and HRM workers by means of face to face and in-depth interview with open-ended questions which are related to work life balance (WLB) and for key informants' questions related to performance of the employees.

The interview format was **semi-structured** because, it helps the participant to talk freely and the investigator to probe based on the primary responses of the participants if further information is needed. The content focused on the lived experience of being a married working mother. Based on their experience they were asked to tell their success at work place and challenges in balancing career and their familial duties. The researcher conducted an interview in Amharic language. To initiate them to tell their experience in detail the initial questions were made to be open-ended questions which can be presented for the participant simply. The interview with the managers or bosses included questions which aim to get information about the employee's if there is any difference on their work accomplishment from other workers.

Focus group discussion (FGD) is also took place to stimulate more ideas about life experience of married working mothers. Focus group interview allowed the researchers to access the practical content of verbally expressed views, opinions,

experiences, and attitudes. The Purpose FGD for this study was to get a variety of perspectives/reactions to the issue and mainly to understand opinions, values and feelings of the participants. So the investigator has conducted one FGD session.

3.7. Method of data analysis

Analysis of data is the most important steps of research process. In qualitative research, findings are not arrived by statistical or other quantitative procedure, instead the finding narrates and content analyzed. After collecting data the investigator examined the data in depth and detail. To describe and explain the phenomena being studied the data analysis process is reviewed and summarized in appropriate way. All the data from the interviews is conducted by recording and hand writing notes. All the data that they give is coded in a form of A, B, C, D so that the Anonymity of the respondents will be maintained. As a method of data analysis the researcher is used a thematic analysis in which all the data is gathered and categorized in to some specific themes. Similar ideas are gathered and categorized under their themes

3.8. Ethical consideration

For this study the researcher first obtained supporting letter from Addis Ababa University Center for Gender Studies. Permission of the research area is asked with a letter from the university. And the following ethical considerations were informed to the participants to deal with the essence of the study.

- The participants were fully informed about the nature, the objective and significance of the study.
- The participants were informed they had the right not to participant, discontinue and not to answer any question that they are unwilling to answer.
- The participants have the right to be informed about the results of the research
- The use of pseudonymous to protect the identity of study participants.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This is the section in which different researches and articles are discussed in comparison with the results documented in this particular research. The study finding is based on the response of sixteen respondents, eleven married working mothers and 5 key informants which consists three co-workers and two bosses of the working mothers. The respondents are coded as A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J and K.

To make it easy for the readers the findings are presented based on the identified themes. During the interview session several issues were raised. So, the investigator identified six themes excluding the information from key informants. The themes include work life balances, challenges, coping mechanism, social support, self-perception, and challenging gender role.

The table below shows that, Respondent's age ranges from 28- 40 years old. All are married and stayed in a marriage from 2 to 20 years. They had an average of one to four kids, from 6 month – 12 years old. 9 of them are orthodox, 1 protestant and 1 Muslim. 9 of them holds Bachelor's Degree and the same two of them holds Master's Degree. From 11 respondents 5 of them have been promoted two years back and four of them have been promoted very recently, ranging from one year to 4 months. And 2 of them haven't been promoted yet.

Table 1: Demographic Background of Respondents

No	Name of with pseudo	Age	Years since married	No of children	Ages of children	Educational background	Career position	Year of promotion
1	A	33	2 years	1	2 years	Bachelor's Degree	HRM	2 years back
2	B	28	4 years	1	4 years	Level 4 Diploma	Operator	7 months before
3	C	29	4 years	2	1 and 3 years	Master's Degree	Investigation officer	Not promoted
4	D	38	13 years	3	12, 9 and 2	Degree	Executive secretary	2 years back
5	E	40	13 years	4	12, 10, 8 and 5	Degree	Reform and good governance	2 years back
6	F	31	7 years	1	4 years	Master's Degree	Director	4 months ago
7	G	34	11 years	2	8 and 5 years	Degree	Training officer	3 years back
8	H	38	20 years	2	10 and 12 years	Degree	Communication officer	1 year ago
9	I	33	7 years	2	6 and 7 years	Degree	Purchasing team leader	2 months ago
10	J	38	5 years	2	6 month and 4 years	Degree	Grievance hearing	Two years back
11	K	33	13 years	2	12 and 7 years	Degree	Office assistant	Not promoted

4.1. Work Life Balance

Regarding to defining work life balance, as stated in literature review part of the study it vary overtime, often on a daily basis (kanthisree, 2013) in this study there is not consistent answer regarding to definition of work-life balance and it is found that attaining work life balance is different before and after marriage many respondents said that it is difficult to balance work and personal life after giving birth. Respondent E replied that

“Work life balance is when your work doesn’t affect your personal life and when your work is not affected by your personal life or when you do it separately without interfering with each other” Mother E, Monday, 15/04/19.

Respondent C also added saying that

“Work life balance is giving equal time for personal time and for work. When one gives more time for one of it / work or for familial issue/ I say work life balance haven’t been achieved”. Mother C, Wednesday, 10/04/19.

Some of them relate work life balance with the time they have for their family friend and other activities beside their formal work. For-example, respondent F said that

“I define work life balance when my work doesn’t affect my relationship with my friends my family and when my personal life doesn’t affect my career and every day task of my work” mother F, Monday, 15/04/19.

Balance has not been suitably defined in the literature (Greenhaus, Collins, & Shaw, 2003). Likely this research finds out that there is no single definition for work life balance. Every working mother interviewed defined work life balance from their own perspective. Thus, on the topic of the questions how working mothers define work life balance, From 11 respondents 6 of them defined work life balance as doing all tasks expected of them irrespective of affecting their personal life.

Others relate work life balance with the satisfaction level of their life not with the performance they have at work. For example, respondent B said that

“For me work life balance is the satisfaction level of a person regardless of what is done or undone I don’t relate it with work performance. The way I balanced the difficulty of work life balance is with the happiness and the hope I have seen in my baby”. Mother B, Tuesday, 9/04/19.

study by (Kalliath&Brough, 2008) also supports this finding by stating that work-life balance exists when a person is satisfied with his or her level of functioning in all domains of life (i.e., work, family, leisure) a finding by (Hudson, 2005). Also supports this finding in defining WLB as a satisfactory level of involvement or ‘fit’ between the multiple roles in a person’s life.

Regarding managing triple role of being wife, mother and employee, most of them believe that they have attained balance with all its challenge. Most of them attained balance with the help of others like, their mother’s sister’s co-workers and their house maids. Only two of them mentioned their husbands for example respondent F said that,

*“I managed to balance my life well after I began to live close to my parents. At work place, the incredible understanding from my immediate boss and co-workers was a blessing.”*Mother F, Monday, 15/04/19.

The finding shows that work place environment and family friendly approach is very helpful for married working mothers so concerning to workplace support 8 of them acknowledge the support of their immediate bosses. They said there is an understanding in the organization for working mothers. Unlikely some of them replied that work and personal life cannot be balanced and that one must take upper hand for example respondent E said that

“Sometimes I may be drowned to one part of my life and neglect the other. As a wife, mother and employee, my personal/private life is the one that demanded too much of my time and attention compared to my work life. Since I am expected to manage so many responsibilities at home, I give more time for my personal things”.Mother E, Monday, 15/04/19

Mother E gives priority for her personal and familial life because it requires more of her time because of her multiple roles. So for her, personal life takes the priority. Respondent F added on saying that

“Especially after I become a mother I’m encountered with many challenges in performing all my roles with expected balance because of dual roles”

The study found out that age of children also makes a difference on balancing career and personal life. Based on the age of their children two respondents said that it’s easy to balance when the kids grow up and know themselves For example respondent E and C said that it was hard to balance work and family life when the kids were little ones they informed that It is better to attain balance when the children grew up for example respondent C said that

“When I was a new mother I used to give much time for my family. And my work was somehow affected, but now my babies are grown that I can live them with my home maid. So I can say I have balanced work and my personal life. Relatively, now I come to work as early as possible and go out on the time. But, Before, I used to go home in the middle of work. Now, I stay until it is time to leave”
Mother C, Wednesday, 10/04/19.

Finding from key informants also approved the above finding that working mother’s lack work life balance when they are new mothers. Especially, after they come back from maternal leave they lack concentration at work and they rush to go home as early as possible. That affects the quality of their work. In addition, when there is work which is to be done in team it stuck if somebody is absent in this case we can’t meet deadlines.

This finding shows that when working mothers have little infant it becomes harder to balance career and personal life. So the age of the child determines level of work life balance.

Two others, respondent E and I defined work life balance as being led by program and leaving their own things aside like, their rest time and etc. respondent I said *that*

*“I managed to achieve work life balance by leaving aside my leisure time and being led by plan I almost left the time I give for other things like social life”
mother I, Friday, 19/04/19.*

The response of Mother I imply that working mothers who have balanced career and personal life are those who lose their quality of life in another sphere this finding is supported by Sundaresan, (2015). She identified that when a woman seeks a position of power within an organization, she must consider the duty on other aspects of her life including relaxations, personal relationships and family.

Some questions were asked to know what different thing male and female colleagues observe in overall performance of working mothers. Most of the colleagues mentioned as Good part of working mothers that when they are focused they do many works simultaneously and they think that being women by itself gave them that talent of doing many things at once. They use even their break time to compensate what is undone

Among the problems they observe on working mother is that they mostly come late to work. Habit of absenteeism and most of the time they cover for them finding gained from their immediate bosses is that they ask frequent permit ion especially to go home early to pick their baby from school. But in whatever way they meet deadlines

4.2. Support System

When it comes to support married working mothers rely on to balance work and personal life, five of them respondent A, B, E, J and F depend on their mothers and they said that they live around there moms on purpose to get support two of them relay on their maids and husbands and one of them indicated her sisters to attain WLB.

A study by Arendell, (2000) indicated that African American mothers rely more on extended family for assistance with child care, and Anglo mothers rely more on neighbors and friends. Likely, in this finding most respondents relay on the support of their mothers and some of them relay on their neighborhood. Respondents K and E said that their neighborhood is so good and it helped them ease work life balance that they do not worry where their kids stay until they come back from work. For example respondent E said that

“I live in merkato were everyone helps each other and Avery one is every ones kids family. So In this regard my neighborhood is the great support I had in my life to raise my kids. The system what is lost in other community exists in ours there is also trust between us to the extent we live our kids the whole day for neighbors” Mother E, Monday, 15/04/19.

On the other hand, a study by Cross-Barnet, & Bell McDonald, (2015) revealed that several African women regretted that there were no relatives living nearby to help with childcare. Comparatively, this study also found that some respondents regret that their parents are passed away and not around to help them in raising their children and they said they will not suffer from lack of child care or house maid if their parents were alive or around. Respondent I and C do not have their families around and respondent D, said that her mom passed away recently she said that

“My mom! uhhh.... Mom was a great support I had in my life not only in taking care of my kids ‘... she cried...’ she was my get-up-and-go factor to finish my education after I give birth to my second baby. The society including my husband was discouraging me to go to school leaving my baby in his early age .but my mom fought for me to go out. I wish she was alive and see my success. Mother D, Thursday, 11/04/19.

Mother D was crying when she tell what her mom’s support mean to here. This shows that mothers have very significant role for working mother to ease child care responsibility and in sharing burdens. In this study almost all except I and C acknowledge their mothers support in raising their children.

Some questions were asked regarding the role of their husbands in sharing burdens and most of them said their husband’s role is very minimal for example respondent G said that

“...but I wish my husband supports me because he is the one who lives with me forever. but he has minor role in the house for example taking the kids to school sometimes he holds the baby for me until I do something, he fetches water and he is better when it comes to taking care of the kids” Mother G, Tuesday, 16/04/19.

As respondent G, I and from the response of most respondent's husbands feel more responsible and do most of things when it comes to their children. Respondent k and A said that her husband does everything. Respondent A said that

“If it wasn't for my husband I couldn't survive motherhood he helps me a lot “

And two respondents I and C relay on their maids because their families are not around they treat their maids as if they treat their family so that they feel home and treat their babies the same way. Respondent I said that

“I balanced it with the help of my maid and by treating my maid psychologically I make her feel home I do everything I can the same way I do it for my children I give her freedom “Mother I, Friday, 19/04/19.

Respondent C also added on saying that

“I'm so much dependent on my home maid so I treat her like queen so that she treats my babies the same way when I am at work”Mother C, Wednesday, 11/04/19.

The response of Mother C shows that how much she is worried about how hair maid treat her children while she stay at work. So she treats her maid in order to guarantee her children's wellness.

4.3. Self-perception

Some questions were asked to know the feeling of married working mothers about fulfilling their responsibility as a mother. Some respondents replied that they don't feel they fulfilled their responsibility and two of them feel guilty about their children. Respondent G said that

“I feel guilty when I get rush and prepare any food that will be ready fast but doesn't contain any good nutrient for my children. I feel guilty when they are sleepy, and I didn't make them dinner as fast as they want, I feel guilty when I couldn't guide them to study by lack of time and I feel so much guilt when they sleep late night waiting for me. I think this all happened because I am working mother and I think I couldn't be perfect mom I feel guilty for them. Mother G, Tuesday, 16/04/19.

Respondent F added saying that

“.... I think I could raise my daughter better if I am not a working mother....”Mother F, Monday, 15/04/19.

A study by Nellemann, (2010) stated that, becoming a „good“ mother included accepting a child can changed the women’s daily lives. In fact, this finding indicated that every married working mother interviewed stated that main change after they married started when they give birth to their baby and the challenge come to be every day. Some questions were asked about the time married working mothers give themselves to rest, for their health and wellness nine of them replied that they don’t have time for themselves

Respondent C said that

“The biggest sacrifice when you are a mother is you almost lose yourself. You live your thing a side. Most of the time, I sleep late at night and wakeup early in the morning so I don’t have time for myself I don’t even have enough time for sleep. Mother C, Wednesday, 11/04/19.

Respondent D said that

“I don’t have time to treat myself. Even when I am sick, I don’t tell my families I just get some rest.” Mother D, Thursday, 11/04/19.

Respondent E said that

“The time I give myself before and after I get married is completely different I don’t even care for what I wear I just pick what I found front. Because, I am restless and give more time for my children some people asks me what happened to me that I almost changed”Mother E, Monday, 15/04/19.

The above finding is supported by study finding of (G. kanthisree, 2013) in that it states the right balance when one is single will be different when after marriage and having children.

Respondent H added on

“I literally don’t give time for myself I don’t even go to hair salon assuming that it can take my time. So I brush it with electric comb even thou I know it damages

my hair. It is my only option with the limited time I have” Mother H, Thursday, 17/04/19.

Only two of them who have grown children said that they have time to take care of themselves for example respondent G said that *“I make time to take care of myself as much as I can”* this shows some mothers, regardless of their busy schedule they can manage to have time to take care of themselves.

Some questions were asked to know how married working mothers feel about their partner’s performance in work and to know that if their partner recognizes their help. Among all respondents nine married working mothers recognize their support towards the success of their husbands in their work in many ways. Like, in advancing their education level, to take field work and move freely to let them have informal communications and network with others so they have better opportunities. So the success they are in is to some extent with the help of their wives

Regarding to their partners perception of their wives role in helping them, Only two respondents replied that their partners assume their effort towards their partner’s success the rest said their husband’s do not even consider their help. They said their partner’s doesn’t consider that doing house chores and undertaking most of responsibilities in the household contribute to the time their husband gets to upgrade themselves in many ways. They don’t see that it has an association with their status.

Concerning to the confidence married working mothers had in fulfilling the responsibilities they had as mother worker and wife, many of them replied that they have fulfilled their responsibility only two of them feel they did not give enough time to say they have fulfilled their responsibility of being mother and perfect wife

On the subject of the satisfaction level about their family, with all its hardship all of them are happy about their being married and having children. They mentioned that the happiest decision they ever made is their being married and having children. Becoming a mother is one such life experience, resulting in further identity formation. The exploration of motherhood is proposed as an ‘essential condition to a healthy identity formation’ (Adams., G., & Jones, R.M. 1983) finding from this study also indicated that working mothers perceive being a mother is the happiest part of their life and if they were not gave birth they don’t they don’t think they will be as happy as they are now.

4.4. Challenges

4.4.1. House maids leaving and child care

Finding from this research identified different challenges for married working mothers that prevent them from achieving balance in their work and non-work lives. Most respondents stated that their main challenge as a working mother is the inconsistencies with the house maid. Respondent D said that

One day after I get dressed and took my bag to go out to work, my maid came in and she said she wants to leave on that day. I felt like the sky falling on my head! I asked her to wait for me till I find someone else. But, she said no and I stayed home for almost a week”Mother D, Thursday, 11/04/19.

Respondent F added on saying.

“Most of the time I was challenged by the lack of babysitters who can take a good care of my daughter while I’m at work.”Mother F, Monday, 15/04/19

Respondent C added saying that

“Once I have faced very hard time. My maid left, my husband was on field work, I have no family around, and our neighborhood is too weak to leave my babies with. And I couldn’t even come to work place even to fill leave paper. My boss said I should come the day after. Because, it was must to fill the leave form to have permission until I find another home maid. That was the very challenging time of my life I even thought of quitting my job”!Mother C, Wednesday, 10/11/19

The response of the above three mothers, indicates that lack of consistent support and no child care service around can cause unbalance in career and personal life. This indicates that working mother who do not have their husband and their family around will suffer a lot than who have someone who can help around. This shows how social support is essential for working mothers to balance their career and personal life.

4.4.2. Gender Role

Regarding to challenging gender role some questions were asked if working mothers ask their partners for support and if they ever tried to challenge the existing gender role and most respondents do not try to challenge the culture about gender role. Respondent E said that

“For me it’s hard to challenge gender role I think my husband even forgets that he married educated and working women because he always watches me running here and there in the house doing house chores. But he takes bath sits on the sofa read something or watches TV show. In this case, instead of trying to change him, I changed into accepting the fact that he won’t change and try to use technologies that can ease my burdens I think it takes forever to change my husband, so I get over it” Mother E, Monday, 15/04/19

Based on the response above, these working mothers do not consider the burden they shoulder as a problem. Rather, they consider it as part of life. This shows that, being educated and engaging in work doesn’t give the ability to see the gender role that puts more pressure on mother as problematic. Respondent F added on saying that

My husband knows that there isn’t work categorized for men and women because we are at the same level of knowledge but because he don’t have an exposure he don’t assume that the house chore is his responsibility. Mother F, Monday, 15/04/19

On the other hand Husbands who grew up helping their parents prefer helping their wives but the social construction of gender role and work categorization for male and female prevents them from sharing their wife’s burden. Respondent K said that

“My husband grew up enjoying helping his mom so I didn’t made my own effort to change him” Mother K, Monday, 22/04/19

Most of the respondents indicated that unless it is must or there is forcing situation they do not ask help from their partners and it is because convincing their husband to help them by itself becomes challenging for them so most of them use technology that eases their labor as solution for example respondent F said that

“My husband performs any sort of domestic work as long as he is the only one left to do the job. But being the only one left to do the work is his precondition to get up and do anything. Also there has to be someone who should tell him what to do every time. Thus, unless he feels like doing something or he is the only one left to do something, nothing is his responsibility or role when it comes to domestic work.” Mother F, Monday, 15/04/19

This shows that almost all respondents fail to challenge the existing gender role because they don't see it as burden and even though they see it as a problem they fail to take the initiative to change it so this shows even educated and working women is tied with the cultural values and traditional roles

Many others also said their partner's cooperation in house chores and in cooking is not suitable for using the available time and resource efficiently because they lack experience, so they choose to do it in their own way. For example respondent H said that

I don't consider my husband's help as a help. Some times when he trays to help me in cooking, he just west's everything that I planned that will be enough for a week. He makes it enough for one day just to make it testy”. (Laughter) Mother H, Wednesday, 17/04/19.

Mother H indicated economic reason for avoiding her partners help in cooking. Finding from FGD also indicated that some mothers don't let their husband in domestic work because their partner don't do it as they expect and it is also to avoid wastage of recourse.

Some questions were asked to examine that what change came because this mothers are educated and working and some of them stated that as an educated women they try to challenge the gender role which disfavors women to get the balance they need in their lives. Respondent C said that

“As educated women I try to solve problem by discussion and we share our burdens I always make an effort to challenge the gender role and I think I am success full for example when I cook he brings the kids from the school but if I where stay at home mother I could be the one who does both things when guest comes he doesn't order me he serves the guest with me but it is my effort to

change him because he came from different background from me” Mother C, Wednesday, 11/04/19.

The above response shows that a woman should realize that the traditional ways would not work all the times, she has got to change her life style and adapt to the new challenges and shed the restraints which keep her bound to the family life. A woman, nevertheless, is not an isolated being but is the significant part of a larger whole. A change in the women alone would not be sufficient to all of the general public. So the society as a whole has to respect to accept her transformed role. For preserving the complex structure of the society, its each and every part must get re-aligned; otherwise it would buckle under the unbalanced strain and give way to chaos. (Sun., 2013)

4.4.3. Work Promotion

Regarding the issue work promotion and being married working mother, from 10 respondents 7 of them replied that it has no impact on their work promotion most of the respondents do not relate work promotion with their being mother while it is strongly related as reviewed in the literature. Unlikely, research finding by Sundaresan, (2015) find out that most executive jobs require a considerable amount of time and effort, which a working mother may not be able to devote due to family obligations. So it might be difficult for a working mother in a demanding career position to be the primary care giver of her child.

On the contrary, response gained from respondents about what they feel about the effect of being married mother on work promotion the rest three respondents stated that being married working mother has negatively affected their work promotion. For example respondent C said that

“I would have been promoted if it wasn’t for I gave birth for my second baby and have some difficulties to work even as I expect myself” .Mother C, Wednesday, 11/04/19.

Respondent I said also added on saying that

“I couldn’t aspire to involve in new things because my routine life doesn’t allow me to have time to add other task on myself like advancing my education if so I would have been promoted” Mother I, Friday, 19/04/19.

Respondent H also added

“ if it wasn't for my families I would have done whatever I want for example I would have been educated earlier, I don't go to school at these age, I wouldn't have engage in this kind of work. And I think I would have promoted. I don't like my work I do it for the sake of survival” Mother H, Thursday, 17/04/19.

The response of mother C,I and H indicates that they assume if it wasn't for they gave birth and tied by the daily and routine activities this motherhood require they think they will be promoted.

4.4.4. Role Conflict

As stated in review of literature role conflict is when two different roles held by the same person conflicts. Or, when the situation where the expectations of a role interrupt the role occupant's personal expectations or values. This study found that most respondents face role conflict when they lack any support around them including their husband for sharing their roles Respondent G said that

“I sometimes I face role conflict because I do all household chores alone. My husband is always unwilling to help. We always fight about it. Finally, I gave up and started doing the whole thing by myself so there is role conflict for example I don't give enough time for my babies either for my husband my husband doesn't help me so the time I should give him passes by work because I am so busy in taking care of other responsibilities.” Mother G, Tuesday, 16/04/19.

Response of mother G indicates that she is the one who performs many roles in her family that can be share by her husband so she encounter conflict between her roles and that makes imbalance in her personal and career life

Regarding to the way they manage role conflict most of them replied that they reduce from the time they give themselves for example respondent A said that

“When I face role conflict I manage it by taking time from my sleep or from the time that I should give myself I haven't faced any stress due to this responsibility, but role conflict exists. Mother A, Tuesday, 09/04/19.

This shows that for working mothers, in order to balance career and personal life they have to reduce considerable time from what was necessary for them to get rest and relax

this is due to that fact that they undertake the house responsibility dually with their career responsibility.

Regarding to social life role almost all working mothers reduce the time they give to take part in social life to reduce role conflict. Except respondent K and E all respondents do not have time to participate in social life

Three others, respondent I, C and G said that their bosses want them to be at work even when there is nothing to do. At the same time if something urgent that needs their existence happened at home or at their children's school they leave. So there is role conflict in such cases for example respondent I said that,

“After I finish my work or what is expected of me I go home to check on my children in the middle of work time that time my boss might not be happy about it even thou I finish my work I must stay there until the time to get out reaches. That, creates role conflict” Mother I, Friday, 19/04/19.

From the response of mother I it is visible that she must stay at work until the time to leave reaches even when she don't have work to do. This is in order to reduce conflict with her boss. This shows there is no work oriented flexibility in the organization

Regarding to how they face role conflict many of them replied that role conflict exists when they try to fulfill all responsibilities expected of them respondent G stated that

“Sometimes there is role conflict when I need to fulfill all of my duties in the house and to on contrary when I try to come early to work and to fulfill my responsibilities at work I reduce the time I should give my family so role conflict is undeniable fact for me” Mother G, Tuesday, 16/04/19

This indicates that it is hard for working mothers to attain all of their roles at the same time fulfilling carrier responsibilities so one must be affected

4.4.5. Multiple Roles

On the topic of challenges from load of multiple roles, this study found that Stress is the first mentioned. working mothers are stressed to reach work on time, to send their child to school and to reach all the children's deadlines on time including food and dress,

and busy for time to look after their home simultaneously (Marie, 2011) this study similarly found further stressing factors for married working mothers besides daily demanding activities of their children, the study found that the very stressing thing is most of the respondents are the one who is in charge of everything in the household.

Study finding of Monog r(2009) supports this idea that housework is still considered the woman's domain. Working women shoulder additional responsibility of the work place as well as at their domestic front. respondents of this research said' that they dually manage the office work with parenting their children and they said that their partners are not supportive regarding to house chores so most of them indicated that source of their stress is load of work and dual burden of taking care of all responsibilities including their husbands. For example respondent G said that

" Sometimes I feel stressed because of my burdens and when I couldn't do it all. And when it is must to just do it. Especially, when I have duty of going to field work I worry a lot about how I leave my kids with their dad because he can't replace me at all. So I prepare enough food until I come back and keep it in fridge. So the triple role makes me stressed out. And sometimes when there is work load, I couldn't do what is expected of me at work because my personal problems stress me out." Mother G, Tuesday, 16/04/19

This shows that however the cause differs (whether it is by lack of exposure or unwillingness to help) husband's fails to engage in house chores and in cooking even when there is forcing situation the responsibility falls on the mother to prepare everything including the times of her absence .

This study also finds out that source of stress for married working mothers differs. Respondent C and F stressed about losing their job resulting from frequent absence from work because of inconsistencies of house maid. This is stressing factor mentioned by many respondents they said they are the ones who take care of such things Respondent F also said that

"I'm always the one who cover the gap leaving my work if it takes to find suitable caretaker. Such cases may occur frequently and take a couple of weeks to be

resolved. Therefore, I might end up using all my annual leave and become stressed about losing my job” Mother F, Monday, 15/04/19

The response of mother F indicates that whatever happens she is the one who is expected to fix it including about her child. Being the one who take the responsibility about everything, makes here stressed because if such cases happen frequently, the precondition is being jobless.

The others are stressed resulting from the problem related with their kids for example respondent J and B said that living our babies to maid servant is very stressing. And respondent J said that

“My baby couldn’t learn to drink milk in bottle he only breastfeed so I have to leave work as early as possible that creates worry about how far I can go this way the other thing is leaving my baby for housemaid is another stressing factor”.
Mother J, Monday, 22/04/19.

On the other hand Respondent k and J haven’t worried to the extent of stress as married working mother. A study by Whitehead (2003) found out that Lack of life balance will lead to health problem and well-being issues like less serious conditions, such as insomnia, fatigue, regular ‘flu and colds, as well as more serious conditions, such as panic attacks, depression and cancer. Unlikely finding of this study discovered there isn’t much problem mentioned by all married working mothers from lack of work life balance except stress.

4.4.6. Other Challenges

The study find out that Absence of proper, accessible and affordable housing and no daycare available around working area, and lack of school nearby to work is another problem contributed for the imbalance in their life in general. For example respondent C and F said that they travel an average of three to four hours every day. In addition, During FGD session, they said that there is a barrier for working mother at all level in government, there is not nearby housing system for working mothers so long-distance transportation kills the energy and time they have for work

Another challenge mentioned is economic difficulty. The inequality of work load and salary mismatches respondent J said that

“Main challenge is economic hardship. First, if I had a car I would have come to work as early as possible, than that of coming in taxi. Second, to balance the stress level about leaving my babies with my maid will be reduced if I can afford employing two maids, and third if there was an arrangement for having our own house, I will use every technology there will be no restriction unlike rent houses. But in handling all these situations when I come late to work, there will be conflict with my boss so for me, the very reason not to achieve work life balance is economic difficulty.” Mother J, Monday, 22/04/19

The other thing they explained as a challenge is that the house work is unpaid, but it takes more time related to the office work respondent D said,

“the house work is a harder task than the office work but the house work is unpaid but I spend much of my time on it, here, at office I spent 8 hours and I am paid for it but in my home I work day and night even with no consideration as work. So it is challenging that household chores are more difficult” Mother D, Thursday, 11/04/19.

Respondent k and G related the challenges they are facing with their womanhood respondent k said that

“There is a challenge on work life but not only because I am a mother but because I am a woman, but I haven’t faced any challenge resulting from work load” Mother K, Monday, 22/04/19.

Respondent G added saying that

“What prevents me from achieving WLB is because I am a woman. The burden and the responsibilities on my shoulder is attached with my being woman. Other problems come next. I am saying this because, if I was my husband, I don’t talk about all the problems I am telling you now.” Mother G, Tuesday, 16/04/19.

For mother G and K the main challenge they are facing comes from their sex. This finding shows that the effect of gender on work life balance is negative.

4.5. Coping mechanism

Depending on the response of most respondents this working mothers enjoy taking care of their children regardless of its difficulty and they assume it as their source of joy and satisfaction they said thinking like it helped them as coping mechanism.

Respondent B said that

“With all the responsibilities I undertake there is always a way out. For example the stress that comes from load of taking care of my baby is always compensated by the happiness I get out of it” Mother Tuesday, 09/04/19.

Respondent G also added saying that

“When it comes to entertaining myself, I create my own world and it is my way out from being stressed. Even though my husband doesn’t give me a time to entertain, thanks to God I had my kids to play with. It doesn’t require me any cost to entertain myself with my kids. Mother G, Tuesday, 16/04/19.

Respondent C added on saying that (*very emotionally*)

“I always found myself in my babies! When I see happiness in their eyes I think I lived happy life” Mother C, Wednesday, 11/04/19.

These working mothers have developed their own coping mechanism especially, the time they spend with their children. The study also indicates that this working mother compensate the treatment and time they lack from their husband by taking time with their children and by the love they get from their children. Regarding to coping up the stress that comes from the business they are in and from load of burdens they said that they manage it by the end satisfaction they get out of the process.

Regarding to coping mechanism married working mothers use to bear their limited time most respondents indicated that they get ready ahead of time like, cooking some food for some days to cope with limited time they have. Waking up early in the morning and sleeping late at night is common among almost all respondents. Respondent E said that

“I wake up early in the morning, go to work, get back home from work and Do what is necessary for dinner. Then, I go to night class and I after I get back home

I rush to feed my kids before they fall asleep this is how it is every day” Mother E, Monday, 15/04/19

Respondent G added on saying that *“Sometimes I cook at night to get rest in the morning”* Relatively finding by Quaye (2011) indicated that the society she studied expects that mothers provide food for the home. And mothers in her study cooked a lot of foods to last for a week or more.

Other way of coping mechanism is taking office work to home and using every free time they had at work. Four respondents A, B, K and D replied that they carry their work home and they use their lunch and tea time to compensate for undone work.

“Respondent K said that “Growing up watching my mom doing so many workloads, mine becomes nothing comparing with her”

From their response this mothers neutralize the situation (the challenge they face from being married working mother see (p.23) some mothers take it as normal they are bounded by the existing gender role so they think that doing all house chores beside their formal occupation is their responsibility and they think they can't challenge the existing gender role so they mentioned that it is better to adapt all of the burden on women for this they mention their mothers the family they grew up as point of reference. So they think the challenge they are facing is not a big deal relatively.

Respondents E said that

“Whenever I come home from work there is another world waiting only for me. It is not my husband or anyone's concern. I get adapt of it. The best thing about me is I try to adapt with the situation even though I am hurt” Mother E, Monday, 15/04/19

Some others cope up thinking about better future for example respondent H said that

“I manage the difficulty of triple role thinking about tomorrow. It is to bring better future for myself and for my daughters. I wish they will never pass the way I passed so thinking about them makes me planed person I did it and I am doing it for the sake of my children”.Mother H, Thursday, 17/04/19.

Using technology to ease workloads and to ask their partners for easy works is mentioned by three respondents H, G, E and I for example respondent G said that

“I buy materials that can ease my burden and use technology as much as possible”

Respondent E also added saying that

“Technology like blender oven laundry and so on eases my burden. Prior to that, it was hard even to sleep 7am at night because most of the time I wash clothes after I come back from work and I notice that I am tired when my hands couldn't hold anything. But now I can cook while I wash clothes in washing machine” Mother E, Monday, 15/04/19

Respondent H added on saying that

“Technology initiates my husband to do household chores because it helps him do it easily for example instead of washing clothes on bowl it is easy to wash in washing machine.” Mother H, Thursday, 17/04/19.

Getting ready ahead of time like, cooking some food for some days and cleaning late night is also other coping mechanism with limited time mentioned by most respondents

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATION

5.1. Conclusion

The society we are living in assigns responsibilities of taking care of the household (children husband and other families around) for women. Married working mothers most of the time carry almost all responsibilities of their home on their shoulder. Findings from this research are an evidence for that fact. And we can see some married working mothers had the privilege to be supported by their husband, family member or neighborhood. The finding also shows that this women's regardless of any help also have been survived all of the burdens and responsibilities in performing their triple role as wife and mother. we can see from the findings, working mothers experienced some challenges and stress in performing their triple roles. In spite of their tough and limited time, they manage to make time for themselves and for their family, even though it is not enough. Besides, this mother fulfilled their responsibility in caring for their children regardless of the difficulties they faced in carrying out their work and family role.

As stated in the finding part of the study the most challenging thing for these mothers is that children cannot be left alone at home when the mothers go to work. So mothers who do not have their family around will suffer from lack of consistent care giver for their kids. But the mothers mentioned that it is must to leave their kids for house maid with all its guilt to work and cope up with economic difficulties. Thus, my advice for working mothers who are struggling to balance their work and private life is, for them to assess the possible support they can find and ask for it. Working mothers should come to a realization with the fact that reproducing the next generation is every ones responsibility. And they should demand the proper help as eligible party. The help might come from government, from society or from their spouse; where ever it comes from they have to know that unless they take action, no one is going to hand it for them. I can imagine how it could be a double burden and it looks like unfair to take such initiative being the one who carry the entire burden of domestic chore. But, considering the long

term positive influence, they can achieve both at personal and societal level. I believe being a change agent is a burden worthy of caring as much as possible.

5.2 Summery

This study had nine major findings, under five themes.

- Working mothers have their own definition of work life balance which differs from each other.
- This mothers face potential challenges in achieving balance in work and personal life. Among the challenges, lack of consistent support, lack of consistent home maid, economic difficulty, work load, no nearby day care and long transportation is mentioned.
- working mothers face stress that comes from the guilt of leaving their kids with home maid, from load of responsibilities and expectations, being the one who manages everything in the house hold, Un supportiveness of partners regarding to house chores, load of work and dual burden of taking care of all responsibilities including their husbands, stress about losing their job resulting from frequent absence from work because of inconsistencies of house maid and stress resulting from economic difficulty that their salary is not enough to raise their kids are mentioned.
- They also have developed their own coping mechanism to help themselves cope up with their situation. Most mothers cope up with the limited time they had by reducing from their sleep time and assigning their tea, lunch and break time for work. The others cope with the situation by adapting with their burdens.
- Working mothers face role conflict when they try to fulfill all their responsibilities beside their traditional role. The finding shows that these mothers do their best to reduce role conflict but they face it with all mentioned coping strategies.
- Regarding to work promotion, most of them replied that their life status, their being married and having children doesn't have an effect on work promotion however some of them mentioned that it has an effect even on their overall growth.
- Some differences are noted in the respondent's self-perceptions and self-report of their strength. Most working mothers perceive themselves as strong and selfless when it comes to their family. As the finding shows they made sacrifices reducing the time they should give themselves and make it for their family. So, most of them don't have time to take

care of their health and wellbeing. But with all its challenge all respondents are happy about their being married and having children. The finding also shows that, those who have their parents around and who have grownup kids have time for themselves.

- The finding shows that support system is essential for married working mothers to be successful both at home and at work place. As most respondents mentioned, they manage to attain work life balance with the help of others like family mother sister or house maid. Thus, for working mother her environment should be conducive to grow. And
- regarding to challenging gender role, even though these mothers are educated, working and have some knowledge about gender role they don't try to challenge it because as most of them said they found it tiresome to challenge the long established and deep rooted gender role. But some respondents have succeeded on challenging it and they have come with helpful husband with their own tireless effort.

5.3. Recommendation

Suggestions of these findings emphasize the need to

- ✓ Promote gender-sensitive policies in the workplace that will enable women to maintain work-life balance.
- ✓ Professional day care services both at community and organizational level should be made accessible and affordable to all. And transportation that specifically addresses female workers,
- ✓ Flexible work arrangements that can address working mothers.
- ✓ allowing faculty to provide of parental and health leaves with no effect on their occupation, manageable work schedules, promoting based on performance, and
- ✓ In order to achieve exclusive breast feeding of a child, policy makers should advocate for maternal leave not to be less than 6 months for working mothers.
- ✓ Dealing with spousal support to help married working mother to satisfactorily perform their roles in the family and at work and at the same time, achieve self-fulfillment

Suggestion for future research

I suggest that further studies should be done in consideration with married working mother's spouses and children's to generate more information from every sides or to identify whether the information gained will be the same or different. Therefore, such a study will provide us with a better insight married working mothers, their spouses and their children. And, In order to increase generalization, future studies can also change the procedural approach. I suggest using both qualitative and quantitative method in order to have a larger sample.

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Annex

Annex 1: Interview Guide

This study in which you are willing to participate is designed to explore the work life balance among married working mothers. The study is being conducted by a graduate student Frehiwot Alemu under the supervision of Dr. Hanna Tegegn, Addis Ababa University Center for Gender Studies. The significance of this study you are being involved is to come up with an in-depth understanding of the triple role of women, with the objective of examining how married working mothers balance their triple role of being wife, mother and employed worker. The study is conducted to have a better understanding of women playing the role of wife, mother, and employee. So, you will have the right not to participate, discontinue and not to answer any question that you are unwilling to answer. You also have the right to be informed about the results of the research and the information you give will be kept in anonymous.

Demographic background

Name

Age

Sex

Religion

Marital status

No of children

Level of education

Carrier status

Last promotion or benefit

Work life balance

1. How do you explain work and life balance?
2. How do you manage being wife, mother and employee?
3. Is there any problem in performing the role of wife, mother and worker?
4. Are you experiencing, or have you experienced conflict or stress from managing work and home responsibilities?

Challenges

5. What challenges have you encountered due to career responsibilities?
6. Do you think your life status influence your work promotion?
7. What barriers prevent you from achieving balance in your work and non-work lives?
8. Have you perceived any career challenges due to parenting responsibilities?

Social support

9. What support (at work and at home) exists in your life?
10. What support do you wish were there?
11. . What is your spouse's role at home?
12. Does your workplace offer some sort of parenting support aimed at improving work-life balance?

Social life

13. Do you have a time to participate in social life?
14. What social responsibilities do you have in your community?

Coping mechanism

15. How do you handle or cope with the conflict or stress experienced from managing work and home responsibilities?
16. What efforts have you made to better balance work and home life?
17. With all the responsibilities that you have outside of work, in addition to your work demands, how do you find time for your own personal health and wellness?

Self-perception

18. What do you think is your strength to stay at work?
19. Do you think you have fulfilled all of your responsibilities as a wife, as a mother and as worker?

20. Describe any particularly regretful or particularly satisfying choices you have made as a working mother
21. What do you think is the effect of your being married and mother on your work and life?

Conclusion

22. Do you have anything else to add

Annex 2: Focused group discussion guide

1. What do you think perceived value of working mother among your community? Is there any impact on your work because of the values people attach with working mother?
2. As educated and working women to what extent have you tried to challenge gender role in your home or in your society? Have you tried to ask your partners cooperation to help you do house chores? If so what is the response?
3. What change came because you are working mothers?
4. Do you feel your partner performs in his work better than you do? If so do you acknowledge your help? Did your partner recognize your help?
5. As a working mother is there anything that prevents you from performing your work in government level, in individual level and structurally?

Thank you for your time!