



An Exploratory Analysis on Work/Life Balance Issues among Women Entrepreneurs in Turkey and Iran

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Abstract

Work-life balance can be defined as the lack of opposition between one's work and other life roles, and maintaining this balance has been one of the most significant challenges to overcome in order to be successful. Since traditionally women entrepreneurs have to undertake multiple roles in relation to their families and their businesses, maintaining a balance between their work and their personal life has become a greater obstacle than that of their male counterparts. It is widely perceived that fulfilling family and domestic responsibilities is a woman's primary role in society; however, the extent of this socio-cultural status varies in different societies and cultures. This study aims to explore the work/life balance (WLB) issues faced by women entrepreneurs in 2 different countries with different socio-cultural and economic backgrounds. Illustrating the impact of social support on different levels of WLB and identifying factors influencing the WLB issues of women entrepreneurs are two of the most important objectives of this study. In order to achieve this end, interviews were conducted with women entrepreneurs in Iran and Turkey.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurs; Work/Life Balance; Iran; Turkey.

Türkiye ve İran'daki Kadın girişimcilerin İş/Özel Hayat Dengesi Üzerinde

Özet

İş-yaşam dengesi, bireyin işi ile diğer yaşam rolleri arasındaki denlik olarak tanımlanabilir ve bu dengeyi sürdürmek başarılı olmak için aşılması gereken en önemli zorluklardan biridir. Geleneksel olarak, kadın girişimciler, aileleri ve kurdukları işletmeler ile ilgili olarak birden fazla rol üstlenmeleri gerektiğinden, işleriyle kişisel yaşamları arasındaki dengeyi korumak konusunda erkek meslektaşlarından daha büyük bir zorlukla karşılaşmaktadır. Aile ve ev içi sorumlulukların yerine getirilmesinin bir kadının toplumdaki birincil rolü olduğu yaygın olarak algılanmaktadır; ancak, bu sosyo-kültürel durumun kapsamı farklı toplumlarda ve kültürlerde farklılık gösterir. Bu çalışma, farklı sosyo-kültürel ve ekonomik geçmişe sahip 2 farklı ülkede kadın girişimcilerin karşılaştığı iş / yaşam denge sorunlarını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Yakın çevreden görülen desteğin farklı iş / yaşam denge düzeyleri üzerindeki etkisini göstermek ve kadın girişimcilerin iş/yaşam denge sorunlarını etkileyen faktörleri belirlemek, bu çalışmanın temel amaçlarıdır. Bu amaca ulaşmak için İran ve Türkiye'deki kadın girişimcilerle yüz yüze görüşmeler yapılarak iş / yaşam dengesi ile ilgili ülkeler arası farklılıklar ortaya konulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kadın Girişimciler, İş-Yaşam Dengesi, İran, Türkiye.

INTRODUCTION

With today's competitive economy each country seeks to attain a method in order to achieve an advantage towards other economies and one of the most significant key factors in economic development is believed to be entrepreneurship (Acs, 2006; Verheul, Stel, & Thurik, 2004). Hence,

there is a worldwide attempt to promote entrepreneurship by governments. Therefore, the role of women participation in the economy should not be underestimated. Since they constitute half of the population, any increase in their rate of entrepreneurial activity not only boosts the economy but also it's believed to be beneficial for the society and women themselves (Coughlin & Thomas, 2002).

This growing interest in entrepreneurship and in recent years women entrepreneurship, has also led to an increase in studies related to this matter. One of the main focuses of such studies is analyzing the problems and obstacles faced by entrepreneurs. Attracting customers, financial problems, hiring qualified work force, managerial issues, handling legal problems and competition are some the main problems faced by entrepreneurs during their entrepreneurial process(Chu, Benzing, & Mcgee, 2007). However further research on women entrepreneurs has proven that aside from the common problems, women also face additional difficulties than their male counterparts throughout their entrepreneurial process(Hisrich, Robert, 2009; Piacentini, 2013). Socio-cultural constraints, lack of networks and maintaining work/life balance are some of the most important problems that women entrepreneurs bear (Bruni, Gherardi, & Poggio, 2004).

WORK/LIFE BALANCE

Work/ life balance (WLB) can be best described as the relationship between one's institutional and cultural times of work as well as non-work in societies that the wages are distributed and gained via labor markets (Felstead, 2002). Clark also simply defines WLB as "'satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict' (Clark, 2000). As the responsibilities and commitments for each individual gets complicated with today's global competition and aging workforce, people have started renewing their interest in their personal lives as well as their family values (Lockwood, 2003). Furthermore, global competition has led employees to be forced to work for longer hours, limiting the time they have, to spend with their family member and making it harder for individuals to reach a healthy balance between their work and family related responsibilities (Burke, 2006). Nowadays work and family are not believed to be separated from each other meaning that each domain can affect the other. Hence, failure in balancing these intertwined domains can have negative effects such as psychological distress and work and life dissatisfaction (Koyuncu, Burke, & Wolpin, 2012). As a result, this subject has attracted the attention of not only scholars, but also many policymakers. So far this increase in this subject has led some organizations and countries to implement some facilitating policies; however these policies do not seem to be sufficient (Sturges, 2004).

WORK/LIFE BALANCE ISSUES FACED BY WOMEN

Work/life balance occurs, when an individual has control over when, how and where they work and this can only be achieved when they feel that their right to fulfill their life inside and outside work is accepted (Pocock, 2005). however, the assumption of people having control over their work and personal environment does not seem to be applicable in reality (Walker, Wang, & Redmond, 2008). As a result, maintaining a balance between work and life responsibilities has become a massive problem especially for women who are traditionally expected to fulfill more responsibilities regarding domestic matters (Jamali, 2008; Rehman & Roomi, 2012). It is believed that work/life trade-off for women, is mainly "uni-directional" whereas this trade-off is considered "bi-directional" for men. This means that in case of some inter-role conflicts men possess the ability to compensate one side, whereas women are expected to always choose and prioritize family over their work (Posig & Kickul, 2004). Consequently, most women see self-employment as a variable option to balance their responsibilities due to the flexibility it provides (Baughn & Neupert, 2006; Rehman & Roomi, 2012). Even though, achieving a flexible time schedule might decrease the risk of work/life conflicts, it does not solve the issue completely.(Jamali, 2008) in many societies, women are still viewed by their predefined roles as mothers and caretakers whereas men are still expected to be the breadwinners(Hisrich, Robert, 2009; Karimi, 2009; McElwee & Al-Riyami, 2003). Consequently, aside

from the roles attributed to their jobs, women are also expected to perform other domestic roles such as being a “good” wife, mother, daughter, caretaker and housewife (Jamali, 2008; Uddin, Author, & Chowdhury, 2015; Walker et al., 2008). Hence, this role overload restrains women from achieving a healthy WLB that may result in job, marital and even life dissatisfaction (Lee Siew Kim & Seow Ling, 2001). However, further studies have shown that family and spousal support has a positive effect on diminishing the risks of work/life conflicts (Brynin, 2000; Kulik & Rayyan, 2003).

Work life balance issues have attracted increasing attention of the scholars within the mainstream research on women entrepreneurs; however, the majority of these researches are being conducted in developed countries (Ahl, 2006; Brush, 2006; Karimi, 2009). On the other hand, regarding the WLB issues faced by women entrepreneurs in developing and underdeveloped countries, the researches seem to be rather insufficient (Karimi, 2009; UNIDO, 2001.). Furthermore, additional studies have revealed that socio-cultural factors such as gender roles and political and economic factors play an undeniable role on an individual’s experience regarding WLB issues (Feldman, Masalha, 2001.; Kulik & Rayyan, 2003). For example, in cultures that people exhibit more tendencies towards power distance and collectivism, the likeliness of them confronting issues regarding WLB augments (Joplin, Shaffer, Francesco, & Lau, 2003).

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN TURKEY

Women in Turkey constitute 50.9% of the population (OECD, 2018); however, according to GEM Turkey report 70% of the entrepreneurs in Turkey are men and only 30% of them are women. In the recent years the government has modified policies in favor of women in order to increase Turkish women’s participation in the economy; Yet again the gap between male and female entrepreneurs exists (Keskin, 2014). According to a research on the obstacles faced by Turkish women entrepreneurs, judgment and beliefs of the society towards women’s value (30%), lack of knowledge (23%), difficulty in finding the necessary capital in order to establish the business (16%) and legal barriers (11) were the main problems faced by the participants (Soysal, 2010). Moreover, Turkish women also see their spouses as another obstacle in their entrepreneurial endeavor. In the patriarchal structure of Turkish society, many of spouses view women’s starting a business as a loss of prestige and status in their male-dominated sphere.(Öğüt, 2006) In another research lack of family support was also mentioned as another difficulty on Turkish women entrepreneurs’ path towards self-employment (Kurtsan, 2011). In another study focusing on the perceived risks by Turkish women entrepreneurs prior to their entrepreneurial activity, 47% of them believed that they faced economic risks, 22.3% domestic, 19.3% physical and emotional risks and finally 5.5% faced social risks. This results show that after economic risks, domestic risks seem to be one of the main demotivating factor for Turkish women entrepreneurs (Ufuk & Özgen, 2001).

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN IRAN

Even though women constitute 49.6% of the Iran population(Abbasi-Shavazi, 2013) and the literacy ratio of women to men is 0.99 showing that women outnumber men in college education, female participation in economy is still considerably low in comparison with their male counterparts (Sarfaraz & Faghih, 2011). According to the General Entrepreneurship Monitor’s (GEM) 2008 report the male overall entrepreneurial activity in Iran is two times more than the female overall entrepreneurial activity (Sarfaraz & Faghih, 2011). Aside from economic problems caused by US imposed sanctions and government intervention in business which has made people reluctant to start a business in the country (Devarajan & Mottaghi, 2014; Sarfaraz, 2016), women also confront financial, socio-cultural and family barriers in their attempt to start a business (Mirghafouri, Sayadi, Taheri, 2010). The existing patriarchal ideology that emphasizes on women’s domestic responsibilities has caused a negative stereotype towards working women (Ghorayshi, 1996). This stereotype has also lead society to underestimate women and their attempt to start their business (Alaedini & Razavi, 2005). Moreover, existence of certain regulations also limits women in their

entrepreneurial activities. For instance, women need their husband's approval in matters like employment or even when they want to attain a passport (Alaadini & Razavi, 2005). Current researches have shown that Iranian women have to confront WLB issues due to the traditional gender roles defining women through their spousal and maternal roles (Karimi, 2009).

Mainstream researches on Turkey and Iran have pointed out that these 2 countries share some amount of cultural characteristics. In an attempt to cluster different cultures Hofstede places Iran and Turkey in the same cluster where there is a strong uncertainty avoidance and power distance and he characterizes these societies as masculine (Hofstede, 1983). Both countries are predominantly Muslim countries thus it can be inferred that Islam would have some effects in their cultural dimensions. Even though, both countries are Muslim it must be kept in mind that the Turkish state is secular and is based on the separation of religion and state. On the other hand, In Iran the state is being run dominantly by religious laws (Kabasakal & Dastmalchian, 2001). Even though both countries share some similarities, they differ in their economic characteristics. According to OECD, Turkish GDP is 766.428 billion USD (OECD, 2018); however, Iran has been suffering from a long term economic stagnation and despite its rich resources as of 2017 has the GDP of 439.5 billion USD (GEM, 2019).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to get a full insight on work/life balance issues faced by women entrepreneurs in Iran and Turkey.

The main objectives of this study are:

- Illustrating different levels of partner/family support received by these women
- Identifying the factors influencing WLB issues faced by these women
- Analyzing the similarity and differences in WLB issues between women in these 2 countries.
- Identifying the techniques that are used by these women in each country in order to overcome their WLB issues.

Since most of the studies done by scholars are mainly conducted in western countries, this study intends to bring a better understanding on this matter in these 2 countries hoping to provide more insight regarding WLB issues faced by women entrepreneurs in these 2 regions.

METHODOLOGY

Since the aim of the research was to gain a better understanding about the opinions and experiences of women entrepreneurs in Turkey and Iran regarding their WLB issues (Merriam, 2002.), qualitative research methodology was considered appropriate. In order to reach this aim a semi-structured question form was prepared based on the sensitizing concepts in the literature. The question form consisted of 7 demographic questions and 6 questions focusing on WLB issues and entrepreneurs' support system. In the process of forming the questions the work of the following scholars were taken into notice (Cross & Linehan, 2006; Jamali, 2008; McElwee & Al-Riyami, 2003; Rehman & Roomi, 2012). Furthermore, in order to remove any possible language ambiguity and achieve a deeper level of communication, the question form was translated into Persian and Turkish. In order to achieve variety in the responses and hence get a more comprehensive result, it was attempted to choose the participants from different sectors. The participants were reached out using convenience technique. Throughout the research 5 participants from Turkey and 5 participants were interviewed. All participants were informed about the interview and its scope prior to the interview via Telephone. In the process of data gathering, face-to-face interviews were made with the participants. The researcher traveled to Iran to conduct the interviews in Tehran. Four of the

interviews in Turkey took part in Istanbul and for one interview because the interviewee's residence was in Edirne, the researcher had to conduct the interview through an online video call. All interviews were tape recorded and later on were transcribed and translated to English for the research.

RESULTS

Demographic profile of the participants (table1) shows that 3 of the respondents are in age range of 20-30 years, while 1 of them is aged between 30-40 years, 3 are in the range of 40-50 years and 3 of them are over 50 years old. Out of 10 participants in total 9 of them are or were married at a point and only one of the participants was single yet in a relationship. 4/5 of the Iranian participants had 2 kids and only one didn't have any kids. However, among Turkish participants, only 2 of them had children and the number of their children was 2 in each household.

As for the years that women were active in business the duration varies from 4 years till up to 35 years. When the ages of the participants were taken into account, it is derived that nearly all of the participants have been playing an active role in the business since their 20s.

Considering the educational level of the participants, all Turkish entrepreneurs interviewed were graduated from university; however, the range in Iran varied 2 PHD holders, 2 university graduates and a high school graduate.

Table1: Demographic Overview

| Participants | Years in business | Age range | Marital status | Children | Education | Nature of business |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------|----------------|----------|-------------|-----------------------|
| TR1 | 14 | 30-40 | Married | 0 | Bachelor | Restaurant |
| TR2 | 4 | 20-30 | Single | 0 | Bachelor | Nutrition |
| TR3 | 20 | 50-60 | Married | 2 | Bachelor | Pastry shop |
| TR4 | 7 | 20-30 | Married | 0 | Bachelor | Jewelry |
| TR5 | 15 | 40-50 | married | 2 | Bachelor | Laundry |
| IR1 | 27 | 40-50 | Married | 2 | High school | Beauty salon |
| IR2 | 23 | 40-50 | Married | 2 | Bachelor | Import/export company |
| IR3 | 21 | 50-60 | Married | 2 | PHD | Dental clinic |
| IR4 | 7 | 20-30 | Married | 0 | Bachelor | Clothing manufacturer |
| IR5 | 35 | 60-70 | Married | 2 | PHD | Shipping |

HUSBAND AND/OR FAMILY SUPPORT

Studies have proven that spousal or family support plays an important role not only in encouraging women entrepreneurs but also in facilitating their endeavor in managing issues related to WLB (Brynin, 2000; Kulik & Rayyan, 2003); hence, participants were asked whether they received any financial or emotional support from their family and/or their partners. As a result, among Iranian women all of them stated that they had supportive husbands and only one received support from

her family. These results highlight lack of support from family members in Iran. It was seen that only one of the Iranian interviewees received support from both her spouse and family. However, all of the interviewees have received at least some sort of support.

On the other hand among Turkish women, the results were more balanced and 4 of the participants believed to have received family support and as for supportive spouses, 3 of the Turkish entrepreneurs received support from their spouse. Among the interviewees one stated that she didn't receive any sort of support from neither her Partner, nor her family. (See figure1)

It is inferred from the interviews that among the Iranian participants none of them received any form of financial support from either their family member or their husband. On the other hand, 2 of the Turkish participants announced that they received some sort of financial support from either their family or their husband. One participant's husband took a loan from the bank in his in order to finance the necessary capital for her business and now she is the one paying the credits. The other one's mother supported her financially after she quit her job, trying to establish her business.

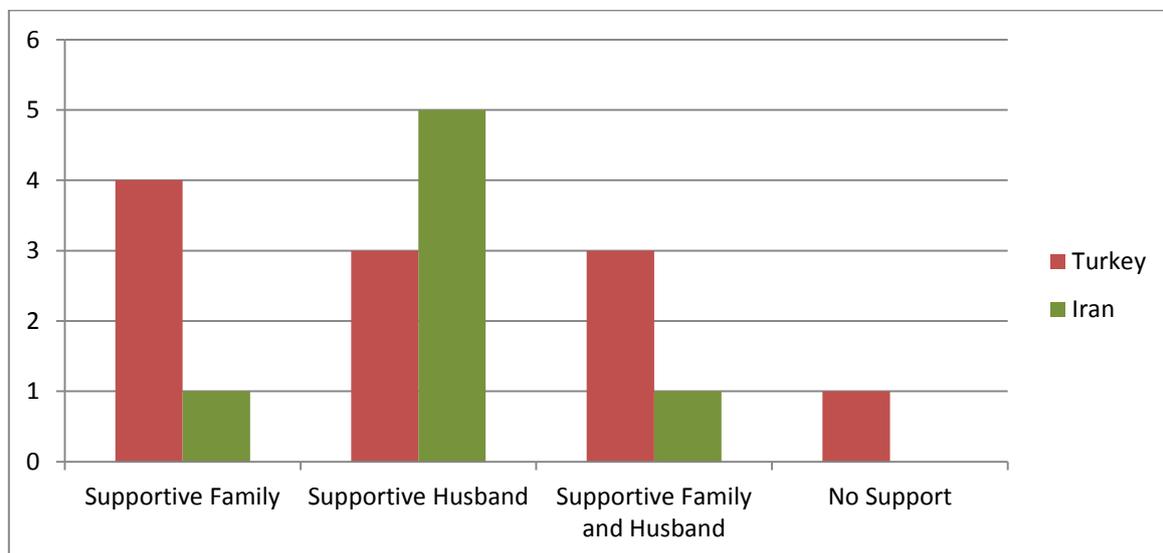


Figure 1: Family/husband Support

Throughout the interviews, when the participants were asked to explain the support they were receiving, the perception of women when they say that they received emotional support from their spouses came to attention. In nearly all interviews the spouse's verbal encouragement or even in some cases his tolerance towards any possible negligence regarding domestic works was viewed as support. None of the participants expected to receive any sort of physical support such as sharing responsibilities regarding the children or house chores. One of the interviewees described the support she received from her husband as:

"I have to say that Mohsen (husband) really helped me. If it weren't for him, I couldn't go to work and spend 10 hours working outside". (IR1)

However, later on, with regards to the subject of her domestic workload, she explained:

"When I was returning home from work I would do all the house chores at night. I was managing my time. I was doing all the house chores on my own". (IR1)

Also in another case, one of the Turkish entrepreneurs explains that she is so lucky in this matter and explains the support she receives from her husband as:

“I’m married now and my husband never told me “no, you can’t do this or you have to do this like that or this.” He is always supportive of my decisions contrary to all standard Turkish men.”(TR4)

WORK/LIFE BALANCE ISSUES:

Studies have shown that the level of patriarchy in a society has a direct impact on the level of WLB. When women Entrepreneurs were asked whether they have faced any difficulty balancing their work/life responsibilities, the majority of Iranian women (4 out of 5) expressed that they’ve faced some difficulties balancing both responsibilities, explaining the role overload they face on a daily basis. (Figure3) IR2 and IR3 said:

“There were a lot of problems and I can say that I dedicated myself achieving a balance. I sacrificed myself for my family and I can say that I did more than what my family and my husband asked from me” (IR2)

“Yes, especially when the kids were younger there were more problems because you wanted to spend more time with them but on the other side you couldn’t go to work less....” (IR3)

On the contrary, none of the married women, interviewed in Turkey, expressed facing any difficulty balancing their work and life roles. The only Turkish participant who acknowledged facing WLB issues was single without children. (Figure2) this finding was contradictory to the previous studies regarding WLB issues among Turkish women, stating that the majority of Turkish women entrepreneurs face difficulties in their attempt to balance their work and life duties (Koyuncu et al., 2012).

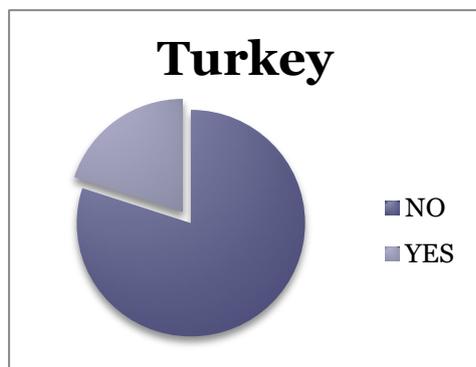


Figure 2: Facing WLB issues in Turkey

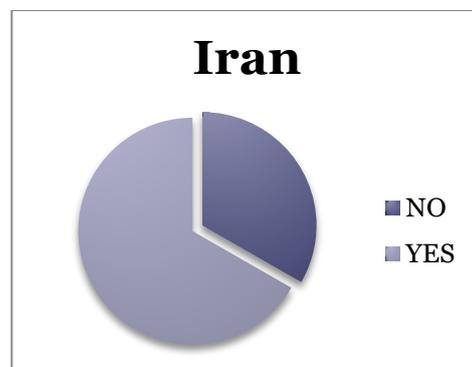


Figure3: Facing WLB issues in Iran

Traditionally women are expected to assume more responsibility than men in domestic matters which means that aside from their responsibilities towards their business they are also held accountable for the majority of responsibilities regarding the household and their children (Jamali, 2008). The results of this study also comply with this statement. Throughout the interviews all women from both countries expressed that it’s expected from them to fulfill all the domestic responsibilities by themselves. And all of them are performing the majority of the roles given to them regarding the household without receiving any support from their spouses.

In some cases in both countries, it was observed that women even internalized their domestic responsibilities to an extent that they considered the time spent performing these chores as a personal time. TR1 said:

“I also make some time for myself to make my home more beautiful.” (TR1)

This internalization of roles also goes further and forms the identity of some women. They express themselves firstly by their roles and the quality of the roles that they are fulfilling to an extent that they relate womanhood to being a good mother, wife and caretaker. One woman explained:

“My personal time is the time that I work, I do all the house chores by myself, I don’t want to ask for any help in this matter, I don’t want to forget my other side as a woman and a mother.”(IR5)

Women most also take care of their physical and emotional health aside from all the responsibilities related to their family and work; however due to the role overload that they experience they seem to neglect this aspect of their lives the most(Mathew & Panchanatham, 2011). This study’s findings also support this theory. The majority of the participants admit that they have dedicated their lives to fulfill their work/life roles and hence considering themselves as the last priority in their lives. This role overload makes it harder for women to maintain a healthy balance between their work and life (family) duties. Also it leads them to neglect their personal lives which consequently can negatively affect their marital, job and even life satisfaction (Lee Siew Kim & Seow Ling, 2001). IR1 expresses her situation as:

“Actually I’ve never lived for myself. What life? There is no time for that. In Iran we sacrifice ourselves for our kids.”(IR1)

All of the participants unanimously believe that the distribution of domestic and childcare responsibilities is not even among men and women in their country. TR2 and IR4 explained:

“Normally if women work too, if they’re always at their work, men expect them to cook, take care of the children and do more.”(TR2)

“Women are considered responsible for everything related to children and house chores even when they are working. I know a lot of families that this is the case for them.” (IR4)

However, while Turkish women found their society and the traditional upbringing of children responsible for this uneven distribution, some of the Iranian participants believed that aside from the society, their government was also not taking any action to support their rights. (IR1) expressed:

“We are living in a country that nothing is right. There is patriarchy and the law doesn’t care either. In a country that women rights are as much as a man’s organ, what else can be done? We can’t do anything. We don’t have any rights in this country.”

TECHNIQUES TO REACH WORK/LIFE BALANCE:

In order to reach a healthy WLB, women entrepreneurs implement several techniques and strategies. These techniques and strategies are focused are rotating around planning, prioritizing and delegating. The most frequent strategy used by women is described as time management (Rehman & Roomi, 2012)

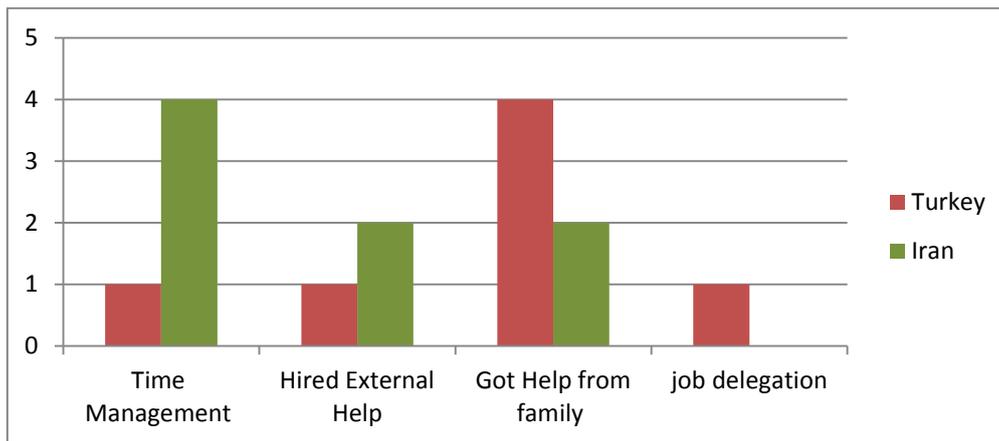


Figure 5: Techniques used by women entrepreneurs to reach WLB

Time management, use of hired help, use of help from family and job delegation was the techniques used by participants in order to maintain their work/ life balance. However, that the main technique used by women was sacrificing their own personal and social life. (See Figure 5)

Iranian women throughout the interviews highlighted the importance of time management as their primary technique in their attempt to fulfill their domestic and work duties. This result is also consistent with previous finding of scholars. Hiring external help and receiving help from family members were the secondary methods used by 3 out of 5 of them.

“I always did everything on my own and for that, I managed my time but I sacrificed myself for it”. Said, IR2

On the other hand, it seems that Turkish women rely more on their family’s help. They especially mentioned that with they seek for the help of their mothers and in some cases their in-laws in matters related to childcare or domestic duties, specifically cooking. Contrary to the Iranian participants, Time-management and hiring external help were not quite favorable choices among Turkish women.

“A cleaning lady comes to the house every 15 days and cleans the house or does our ironing; but aside from that because I work, I can’t cook so my mother and his mother help us. Whenever we go to their house, there is food waiting for us.”(TR4)

CONCLUSION

Even though the number of women entrepreneurs has been increasing in Iran and Turkey over the past years, the majority of their potential still remains untapped due to many socio-cultural constrains that they face. Work/life balance is one of the most significant obstacles that these women have to overcome in order to achieve success. Throughout the research it was viewed that women in both countries face WLB issues to an extent. In Iran, women asserted that they face these problems in their lives and reaching a balance needed a great amount of sacrifice. However, while the majority of women in Turkey claimed that they never had any difficulties balancing their personal and professional lives and the responsibilities that come with it, they expressed that they have to fulfill their roles as a caretaker, housewife, mother, wife and daughter on their own. Moreover, they also believe that the distribution of domestic responsibilities between men and women is not fair in their country and hope for a change. It seems like Turkish women have internalized their roles to an extent that even they perceive admitting or even accepting to have some troubles balancing their work/family life might mean that they are not “good” mothers, wives, daughters or even business

owners. As for the support received from women entrepreneurs it can be inferred that Turkish women get most of their encouragement from their families, whereas in Iran men are more supportive in their spouse's entrepreneurial process than these women's family. Hence, it is seen that women in Turkey have more confidence in asking for some help in order to fulfill some domestic duties than their Iranian counterparts. The lack of support from family has pushed Iranian women entrepreneurs to rely on either external help, or themselves to strike WLB.

In both countries support is merely defined as verbal encouragement and in some cases "lack of complaints" from spouses by women entrepreneurs. The fact that their family and spouse are not taking any action to hurdle their endeavors suffices them. However, all participants from both countries found the distribution of childcare and domestic responsibilities uneven and unfair among women and men and they hope to see these beliefs changed in the future.

Women in both countries have internalized their roles to an extent that they define themselves through the quality of these roles that they perform. This can mean that the society's expectation from women and its definition of a "good" woman has stripped them from their identity as an individual being. These roles that are imposed on women and high expectations from them have also pushed them to sacrifice all their needs and desires in order to meet these expectations. In some cases women implied that they feel guilty because they believe that they are sacrificing their "primary" duty as a good wife and mother in order to work. This sense of guilt and sacrificing one's personal life can have negative effects on not only women's health but also can affect their job, personal and marital satisfaction.

It seems like even though both countries are going through an economic transition leading to a shift in roles designated to each gender by the society, women still have to endure a great deal of burden in order to play an active role in the society and in order to encourage more women into the business, drastic changes have to be made in order to lift these burdens from women. As a result of this study, it can be inferred that although the attempts made by the governments in empowering women have been successful to a point, they are not sufficient and women need more educational and cultural support in order to redefine their place in the society. This can only be achieved by providing necessary trainings not only for women but also to the children at an early age to make them aware of their individual value aside from the roles assigned to them due to their gender.

Finally, it must be acknowledged that even though this study has several strong aspects it is not without limitations. The size of the sample can be one of the limitations and due to the sample size the results are not suitable for generalization, however, the results can be used to give a general idea about this topic. Further research can study on the impact of women's networking and its effect on reducing work/life balance issues. Also another aspect that could be useful in further understanding this matter can be women's perception of success in relation with WLB issues that they face.

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