

# A STUDY ON THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF ROLE CONFLICT OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES

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**Abstract:** A role conflict is when a person is expected to fulfil the duties of two contradictory position. In some cases the conflict is a result of opposing obligations which results in a conflict of interest, in others when a person has roles that have different statuses and it also occurs when people disagree about what the responsibilities for a particular role should be whether in the personal or professional. The present study is to exhibit the nature and extent of role conflict of women employees and to identify the factors causing the role conflict. The nature of role conflict experimented by working women could be assessed based on the sources from which they emerge. Husband, Parents, and children are the major three family members exerting pressure on working women. Under each category five attributes expressing the nature of role conflict are considered and the responses so received are given weightage, resulting in assigning ranks for such attributes weighted average method is used and the result are furnished in this study.

**Keywords:** role conflict, women employees, informal sector.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Analysis on nature and extent of role conflict experienced by women employees is attempted in this paper. Husband, parents and children being the major sources of role conflict of women employees. The nature of role conflict experienced by them is analysed is analysed from their angle. Further the extent of role conflict experienced by them is analysed across their selected independent demographic variables with the focus of their influence. The analysis is carried through three occupational categories of women employees, namely 'saleswomen', 'teachers' and 'nurses'. Based on the requirement of the analysis, the chapter has been discuss the nature of role conflict and the several section is to analyse the extent of role conflict experienced by respondents.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kapur (1974) indicated that women who choose to combine marriage with job face almost a situation of formlessness and they hardly known how to apportion time and resources between these two major responsibilities. This makes them experience great conflict, tension and strain.

Paterson (1978) confirmed that the job taken by women created more conflicting situations for them due to dual role played and inability to tolerate the whole burden.

Gilbert (1975) reported the women who assumed home roles (eg: Wife, mother and a home maker) and non – home roles (eg: employee) frequently experienced conflict between competing role demands. Conflicts were considered likely when women perceived their home and job roles as highly desirable but mutually exclusive.

Gutek.et.al (1981) found that the inter-role conflict is likely to increase as the demands of either the work role or family role increases similarly, inter – role conflict can increase as one's obligation to the family expand through marriage and the arrival of children.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

1. To know the nature and extent of role conflict of women employees and its association / relationship with their demographic features.
2. To identify the factor – determinants causing the role conflict and its agreeability among the respondent – women employees.

**3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Data collection constitutes the integral element of the research work. This study employed in – depth personal interview using well structured and tested interview schedules to collect primary data from the respondents. Besides, open and close ended questions were used to elicit information on nature, sources, consequences of role conflict of women employees, strategies adopted to solve role conflict. The Responses on statements were collected on 5 point Likert Scales by ‘Strongly Agree’ to ‘Strongly Disagree’) to express the degree of agreement and disagreement.

Books, research journals, research projects, thesis, news papers, reports of government and non – government organisations (NGO’s) and websites were referred to collect secondary data. The present study is both descriptive and analytical in its content and based on both primary and secondary data. Sample survey method was employed to collect the required primary data.

Morgan Table was employed to determine the sample. As per the table at 5% significance level, a sample of 384 was taken for the study. Based on the objectives of the study, percentage analysis and weighted average method was used to analyse the data in the study.

**4. INTREPRETATION AND RESULT**

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

Table-1 shows **of role conflict experienced by sales women**. Husband, parents and children of sales women are considered as the source of role conflict for them. The total score for nature of conflicts experienced from husband is 2132. Among which husbands feeling of over burdened with family responsibilities ranks first, late arrival ranks second, feeling of not paying much attention to the need of husband ranks third, never bother about the tension of the respondent rank fourth and fifth rank is for unwilling to mingle with male colleagues.

The total score for nature of conflict experienced from parents are 2234. In which guilty of pushing work ranks first, feeling of not attending them in the time of emergency ranks second, feeling of not spending enough time with them ranks third, troublesome feeling in married life ranks fourth and fifth rank is for fear in job related problems.

The total score for nature of conflicts experienced from children is 2216. In which the first rank is for feeling of leaving them alone at home, feeling of failing as mother ranks second, could not spare time for their education ranks third, could not spend quality time with children ranks fourth and fifth rank in for feelings of neglecting them.

**TABLE 1: ROLE CONFLICT EXPERIENCED BY RESPONDENT SALESWOMEN**

S.No.	Nature of conflict	Total Score	Average Score	Rank
1.	<b>Nature of conflicts experienced from husband</b>			
	a) Feeling quality of not paying enough attention to the needs of husband	422	2.5	3
	b) Husband feeling overburdened with family responsibilities	510	3.05	1
	c) Never bothered to ease my tension	384	2.3	4
	d) Late arrival always link him	528	3.1	2
	e) Unwilling to mingle with male colleagues	288	1.7	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2132</b>		

2.	<b>Nature of conflicts experienced from parents</b>			
	a) Feeling of not spending enough time with them	574	3.4	3
	b) Feeling quality of not attending them even in times of emergency	610	3.6	2
	c) Having guilty of pushing me to work	640	3.8	1
	d) Fearing trouble in my married life	220	1.3	4
	e) Fearing job – related problems may ruin my life	190	1.1	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2234</b>		
3.	<b>Nature of conflicts experienced from children</b>			
	a) Could not spare time for their education	490	2.9	3
	b) Could not spend quality time with time	388	2.3	4
	c) Feeling of failing as mother	528	3.1	2
	d) Feeling of neglecting them	192	1.1	5
	e) Feeling of leaving them alone at home	618	3.7	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2216</b>		

Table 2 shows the role conflict experienced by respondent teachers.

The total score experienced from the source husband is 1580. In which the first rank in for is for unwilling to mingle with male colleagues, feeling quality of not paying enough attention to the needs of husband ranks second, husband feeling overburdened with family responsibilities ranks third, never bothered to ease my tension ranks fourth and fifth rank is for late arrival.

The total score experienced from the source parents is 1130. In which first rank is for feeling of not spending enough time with them, having guilty of pushing me to work ranks second, fearing trouble in my married life ranks third, feeling quality of not attending them even in times of emergency ranks fourth and fifth rank is fearing job – related problems may rain in their life.

The total score experienced from the source children is 944. In which first rank is for feeling of leaving them alone at home, could not spare time for their education ranks second, could not spend quality time with time ranks third, feeling of failing as mother ranks fourth and fifth rank in for feelings of leaving them alone at home.

**TABLE 2: ROLE CONFLICT EXPERIENCED BY RESPONDENT TEACHERS**

S.No.	Nature of conflict	Total Score	Average Score	Rank
1.	<b>Experienced from Husband</b>			
	a) Feeling quality of not paying enough attention to the needs of husband	410	2.7	2
	b) Husband feeling overburdened with family responsibilities	382	2.5	3
	c) Never bothered to ease my tension	180	1.2	4
	d) Late arrival always link him	170	1.1	5
	e) Unwilling to mingle with male colleagues	422	2.8	1
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1580</b>		
2.	<b>Experienced from Parents</b>			
	a) Feeling of not spending enough time with them	380	2.5	1
	b) Feeling quality of not attending them even in times of emergency	180	1.2	4
	c) Having guilty of pushing me to work	210	1.4	2
	d) Fearing trouble in my married life	190	1.3	3
	e) Fearing job – related problems may ruin my life	170	1.1	5
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1130</b>		
3.	<b>Experienced from Children</b>			
	a) Could not spare time for their education	210	1.4	2
	b) Could not spend quality time with time	194	1.3	3
	c) Feeling of failing as mother	180	1.2	4
	d) Feeling of neglecting them	230	1.5	1
	e) Feeling of leaving them alone at home	130	0.9	5
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>944</b>		

Table 2 shows **the role conflict experienced by respondent teachers.**

The total score experienced from the source husband is 1580. In which the first rank in for is for unwilling to mingle with male colleagues, feeling quality of not paying enough attention to the needs of husband ranks second, husband feeling overburdened with family responsibilities ranks third, never bothered to ease my tension ranks fourth and fifth rank is for late arrival.

The total score experienced from the source parents is 1130. In which first rank is for feeling of not spending enough time with them, having guilty of pushing me to work ranks second, fearing trouble in my married life ranks third, feeling quality of not attending them even in times of emergency ranks fourth and fifth rank is fearing job – related problems may rain in my life.

The total score experienced from the source children is 944. In which first rank is for feeling of leaving them alone at home, could not spare time for their education ranks second, could not spend quality time with time ranks third, feeling of failing as mother ranks fourth and fifth rank in for feelings of leaving them alone at home.

**TABLE 3: NATURE OF ROLE CONFLICT EXPERIENCED BY RESPONDENT NURSES**

S.No.	Nature of conflict	Total Score	Average Score	Rank
1.	<b>Experienced from Husband</b>			
	a) Feeling quality of not paying enough attention to the needs of husband	212	1.8	4
	b) Husband feeling overburdened with family responsibilities	190	1.6	5
	c) Never bothered to ease my tension	284	2.5	3
	d) Late arrival always link him	380	3.3	1
	e) Unwilling to mingle with male colleagues	312	2.7	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1378</b>		
2.	<b>Experienced from Parents</b>			
	a) Feeling of not spending enough time with them	294	2.6	1
	b) Feeling quality of not attending them even in times of emergency	180	1.6	2
	c) Having guilty of pushing me to work	140	1.2	4
	d) Fearing trouble in my married life	164	1.5	3
	e) Fearing job – related problems may ruin my life	126	1.1	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>904</b>		
3.	<b>Experienced from Children</b>			
	a) Could not spare time for their education	246	2.1	2
	b) Could not spend quality time with them	220	1.9	3
	c) Feeling of failing as mother	386	3.4	1
	d) Feeling of neglecting them	176	1.6	4
	e) Feeling of leaving them alone at home	140	1.2	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1168</b>		

Table 3 shows **role conflict experienced by respondent nurses.** The total score experienced from husband is 1378. In which the first rank in for late arrival always like him, unwilling to mingle with male colleagues ranks second, never bothered to ease my tension ranks third, feeling quality of not paying enough attention to the needs of husband ranks fourth and fifth rank is for husband feeling overburdened with family responsibilities.

The total score experienced from parents is 904. In which first rank is for feeling of not spending enough time with them, feeling quality of not attending them even in times of emergency ranks second, having guilty of pushing me to work ranks third, fearing trouble in my married life ranks fourth and fifth rank is fearing job – related problems may rain in my life.

The total score experienced from children is 1168. In which first rank is for feeling of failing as mothers, could not spare time for their education ranks second, could not spend quality time with time ranks third, feeling of neglecting them ranks fourth and fifth rank in for feelings of leaving them alone at home.

**TABLE 4: OVERALL CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONDENT – SALESWOMEN BASED ON THEIR EXTENT OF ROLE CONFLICT**

S.No.	Extent role conflict	Respondents	Parentage
1.	Low	38	23%
2.	Medium	97	58%
3.	High	32	19%
	Total	167	100%

It is understand from table 4 that out of 167 respondent. Saleswomen, 38(23%), 97 (58%) and 32 (19%) belong to the extent of role conflict category of low, medium and high respectively. At overall level, a majority of saleswomen experienced the extent of role conflict at medium level (58%).

## 5. FINDINGS

- It is found that the difficulties most experience by nurses were unable to withstand stress and strain at home and work place, reduced work performance and could not concentrate on self – development.
- It is found that at overall level the most two important difficulties experience by working women were, unable to withstand stress and strain at home and at work place and less concentration on daily work.
- In case of role conflict experienced a majority of
  - Saleswomen experienced the major role conflicts, such as ‘feeling overburdened with family responsibilities’, ‘feeling quality of pushing me to work’ and ‘feeling of leaving them alone at home’, from the side of husband, parents and children respectively.
  - Teachers experienced the major role conflicts such as ‘unwilling me to mingle with male colleagues’, ‘feeling of not spending enough time with them’, and ‘feeling of neglecting them’, from the side of husband, parents and children respectively.
  - Nurse experienced the major role conflicts such as ‘late arrival always irks him’, ‘feeling of not spending enough time with them, and ‘feeling failing as mother’ from the side of husband parents and children respectively.

## 6. SUGGESTIONS

As the contribution of informal sector to the national economy is significant and it mostly represented by women employees, the government has the responsibility to protect the interests of working women who stepped out of their hones mostly because of economic response.

Though it is not possible to introduce ‘formality’ on all aspect of informal sector, a minimum formality may be ensured on the job security and working conditions. There are certain provisions in labour laws protecting the interests of employees, but they are not implemented in letter and spirit.

New provisions may be amended in the existing laws with a view to protect the interests working women especially covering the healthcare facilities, children’s welfare and counselling programmes. The genuine commitment and involvement of government may only help addressing this social issue of role conflict of women.

Besides the support of family members, employers a subordinates, a social charge in the attitude of people towards working women is much required. Though modern women looked relieved from the clutches of traditional bondage not really from the mindset of people.

## 7. CONCLUSION

The results of the study reveal that role conflict in not a function of any single factor but many factors contribute to make role conflict a reality. As the informal sector comprises of multiple occupational categories of jobs and positions, the present study has undertaken the role conflicts of women employees in three categories of commercial establishments, educational institutions and healthcare units where their presence is at majority. The final inference is described to the study from the overall results arrived on the three categories of women employees. Based on such inferences, the major recommendations and made by the researcher.

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