

# IMPACT OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE ON BUSINESS GROWTH OF FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS IN SOUTH-WESTERN NIGERIA

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## Abstract

*Work-life balance has been a growing concern for female entrepreneurs in recent times. Managing the demands of both work and family is a challenge that has been previously overlooked for female entrepreneurs. Nowadays, businesses are characterised by persistent changes, uncertainties and excessive pressure to increase growth, productivity and performance. In the midst of all this, the high demands on the time of female entrepreneurs to perform their statutory roles cause disequilibrium between their work life and family life which may have an impact on their businesses. Hence, the study examined the impact of work-life balance on the business growth of female entrepreneurs in South-Western Nigeria. A sample size of 379 respondents were selected using purposive and stratified sampling techniques from a population of 25,122 members of Nigeria union of tailors in Lagos, Oyo and Osun States. Primary data was collected through the use of structured questionnaire and standard multiple regression was used for the analysis. The result shows work demands, wellbeing, family workload and spousal support with coefficients 0.585, 0.421, 0.207, 0.461. The study also found out that every unit change of work-life balance would lead to 0.581 unit increase in business growth. Therefore, the study concludes that work-life balance contributes significantly to the business growth of female entrepreneurs. The study, therefore, recommends that female entrepreneurs should strive to maintain work-life balance as this will help them to manage their work roles, family roles and personal life and improve their business growth.*

**Key words:** work-life balance, business growth, performance and female entrepreneurs

## Introduction

Twenty-first century businesses are characterised by persistent changes, uncertainties and excessive pressure to increase productivity. These changes disturb the balance in the lives of female entrepreneurs by causing pressure and stress. This is also fuelled by extreme levels of competition in the business sphere posing new challenges and problems to owners. The incessant demands on the time of female entrepreneurs and the effort to enhance performance have created enormous stress and pressure. This has led to disequilibrium between work-life and family life. Consequently, the quality of life of most female entrepreneurs have been compromised because of long hours they spend at work place and the need to take their office work home for completion.

Women in both paid employment and entrepreneurship Consistently battle with the increasing demands from work and family. For those in paid employment, government policies and organisational initiatives have been deployed to foster work-life balance of their employees. These initiatives include education programmes, leave policies, child-care, telework, work schedules and other practices that contribute to employees' work-life balance. Government policies also ensure that employment guidelines and regulations are followed by organisations to promote work-life balance. The daily pressure to meet work and family demands and the ability to cope with the stresses, strains and time issues associated with these responsibilities are demanding for women (Shmiln, 2017).

Many female entrepreneurs in Nigeria are not paying the required attention to the influence work demands have on business growth and profitability. Work demands refer to the physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects of the work that require sustained physical and psychological efforts. A lot of these women have other roles which compete and conflict with their roles as entrepreneurs; their roles as wives, mothers, daughters, caregivers and home-makers. Also, instability in the home due to spousal interference, unsupportive attitudes and cultural orientations are factors that may affect the efficiency and effective service delivery levels of female entrepreneurs especially in the informal sectors.

Global modernisation is gradually changing family patterns due to economic and demographic changes that are increasingly separating family from the economic sphere and changing ideas about appropriate family roles, especially women's roles. Managing these work roles and its overall effect on the business growth of women entrepreneurs is of great concern in today's world.

## Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to determine the impact of work-life balance on the business growth of female entrepreneurs in South-Western Nigeria

## Literature Review

### Concept of Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is a very important phenomenon that is of great concern to employees, entrepreneurs and organisations (Abdulraheem, 2014). It is more than prioritising the work role and one's personal life; it also affects the social,

psychological, economical and mental well-being of the individual. According to Grady, McCarthy, Darcy and Kirrane (2008), the term work-life balance is broad and it includes family, community, recreation and personal time. Every individual is an integral part of the family and the society in general. Work-life balance has implication on individual attitudes, behaviours as well as organisational effectiveness (Adisa, Osabutey & Gbadamosi, 2017; Obamiro, Balogun & Kehinde, 2016).

Epie (2010) refers to work-life balance as satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home, with minimum role conflict. Work-life balance is the extent to which an individual is equally engaged and satisfied with work and family roles. Neneh (2018) defined work-life balance as the alignment of roles in the work and family domain together with the individual's life priorities to achieve effectiveness and satisfaction. Oludayo, Falola, Ahaka and Fatogun (2018) defined, work-life balance as the extent to which a person can simultaneously balance the emotional, behavioural and time demands of work, personal and family responsibilities. Work-life balance is the integration of work and non-work, so that men and women can achieve their potential across the domains in which they play out their life roles (Akinyele, Peters & Akinyele, 2016; Gentry, Bankole & Saka, 2017). Manfredi and Holliday (2004) describes work-life balance as complementary elements of a full life involving work and personal life.

Work-life balance is one of the relevant human resource practices in relation to productivity and performance of the organisation (Ojo, Salau & Falola, 2014). Work-life balance issues affect both men and women. It can cause conflict for both men and women and can lead to psychological strain, physical health, depression, burnout and anxiety. The main thrust and perception of work-life balance includes the attitude towards work, the problem of working long hours, separation of work from life. The effect is more on women who have stereotyped roles of child and family care (Abdulraheem, 2014).

The word work in the phrase work-life balance largely connotes all activities relating to income generation (Budd, 2011). The term work is not merely job or task given, it focuses more on the individual needs and perspective as it relates to work performance. Most researchers have used concepts such as work overload, role overload and number of hours worked to explain work demand. However, others have stated these concepts to be predictors of work demand (Fapohunda, 2014). Work demands include workload, the amount and type of work to be done, number of hours, work roles and expectations, job requirements both physical and mental

demands as well as level of responsibility. Standard working hour may give different work demand in the business sector. This also aligns with different job descriptions and specialisation.

Taking all of the above into consideration, work-life balance is conceptualised as the broad assessment that individual and environmental resources are sufficient to meet demands, demonstrated by reduced conflict and greater facilitation, such that integration is perceived between work and personal life domains resulting in positive general health, satisfaction, business growth and work performance outcomes. This conceptualisation parallels and expands on previous handling of the work-life balance concept. It takes into consideration the antecedents of work-life balance (individual and environmental work, non-work demand and resource characteristics), aspects of the work-family interface (reflected in the degree of conflict and facilitation present), the individual's perception of work-life balance and the personal consequences of balance (such as good health, behaviours, satisfaction and performance).

### Concept of Business Growth

The growth of every business largely depends on a lot of factors ranging from the individual entrepreneurs' level of education (Rauch & Rijskik, 2013), experience (Achtenhagen, Naldi & Merlin, 2010), age (Navaretti 2014), fear of failure (Douglas 2013), growth intentions (Douglas 2013) and growth aspirations (Hermans, Vanderstraeten, Dejardin, Ramdani, Stam & Van Witteloostuijn, 2012). For small businesses, growth is an important phenomenon that determines their survival and power to participate in the market with other businesses. Business growth is a function of the business lifecycle, industry growth trends, and the owner's desire for value creation.

Wakkee, Van Der Veen and Eurlings, (2015) define business growth as geographical expansion, increase in the number of branches, inclusion of new markets and clients, increase in the number of products and services, fusions and acquisitions, It is a change in size during a determined time span. Achtenhagen, Naldi and Merlin (2010) defined growth as increase in sales, number of employees, profit, assets, firms value and internal development. Also, business growth may be related to new markets as opined by Omri and Ayadi-Frikha (2014). These definitions of growth all encompass the consequences of different dynamics adopted by the entrepreneur and the enterprise to construct and reconstruct.

Business growth is the outcome of a good administration of resources and capacities which is used to promote growth. A lot of business owners see growth as the aspiration to expand business (Federico & Capelleras, 2015). Growth intentions sometimes do not translate to growth expectations as both represent what is desired and what is expected. Every business owners has different growth intentions and these range from autonomy, balance between family and work, self-actualisation, etc. For entrepreneurs, growth may mean the equilibrium between work and family (Leitch, Hill & Neergaard, 2010) and perhaps that is the reason many entrepreneurs with high growth previously defined their growth limit (Achtenhagen et al., 2010).

In business literature, Gorgievski, Ascalon & Stephan (2011) submitted that entrepreneurial success criteria include innovative behaviour, business growth and subjective business performance. Business growth has value for the society by creating wealth and jobs. It is generally acknowledged as the recognition of market opportunities, new product development, vision, ingenuity, optimism and self-efficacy in the face of failures and hurdles (Machado, 2016).

### Theoretical Review

#### Job demands-Resources Model for Entrepreneurs

The theoretical basis of this study is the Job demands-resource model (JD-R Model) by Bakker and Demerouti (2007). This model is commonly used in the literature on work engagement and work-related strain. The central assumption in the Job demands-resource model is that work-related strain develops when (certain) job demands are high and when (certain) job resources are limited, leading to exhaustion and undermining of work engagement (Bakker, Demerouti & Verbeke, 2004). In contrast, when job resources are high, the motivational process is activated, leading to work engagement and higher work performance (Bakker, et al. 2004). Among entrepreneurs, different relationships of the JD-R Model are investigated in various studies; however, the classification of Dijkhuizen, Veldhoven & Schalk (2014) of entrepreneurial job demands which were time demands, uncertainty and risk, and responsibility are commonly used.

The practical implication of this model provides the researcher with the understanding that entrepreneur have a sense of energetic and effective connection with their work activities and they see themselves as able to deal well with the demands of their job (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Work-related strain on the

other hand refers to long-term exhaustion from work, and diminished interest which could be as a result of work or other factors (Leiter, Bakker & Maslach, 2014). A central element of the JD-R Model is the idea that every occupation has its own specific working conditions and risk factors associated with work engagement and work-related strain. For female entrepreneurs, coping with a high level of uncertainty, responsibility, risks, and a heavy work load alongside their stereotyped roles is demanding (Dijkhuizen, Gorgievski, Veldhoven & Schalk, 2017; Berkery, Morley, Tiernan, Purtill & Parry, 2017; Dijkhuizen, et al, 2014; Drnovsek, Örtqvist & Wincent, 2010). These indicators can be considered job demands, which directly relate to work-related strain. It is therefore not surprising that entrepreneurs overall experience high stress levels (Wincent & Örtqvist, 2009) and this could practically have a consequence on their performance.

#### Empirical Review

McGowana, Redeker, Cooper and Greenan (2012) carried out a research on Female entrepreneurship and the management of business and domestic roles: motivations, expectations and realities in Northern Ireland. The objective of the study was to explore the motivations, expectations and actual experiences of female entrepreneurs on entrepreneurship, and the extent to which entrepreneurship really offers an improved work-family balance. The research adopted an exploratory qualitative study among 14 female entrepreneurs and it focused on the entrepreneurial journeys of the women as they established and managed their ventures, while balancing domestic and family demands. In-depth interviews were conducted and this gave an insights into the realities of their experience. The study found that a major motivation for female entrepreneurs was a desire to balance familial responsibilities (child and home care) with running their own business and, thus, fulfilling an ambition to be their own boss. The study concluded that female entrepreneurs should recognise the merits and demerits of having control of ones venture and also approach entrepreneurship with a realistic and clear view and awareness of the commitment required to be a success.

Onur (2014) examined the application of work-life balance, job stress and individual Performance in Turkey. The study adopted factor analyses, correlation and regression analyses. Findings from the study showed strong relations between job stress, performance and work-life balance factors. The study concluded that family to work and work to family interactions had a significant effect on job stress and, when overstressed, it could cause personnel and organisational problems that directly decrease performance and productivity.

Dijkhuizen, Gorgeivsk, Veldhoven and Schalk (2014) conducted a cross-sectional study on feeling successful as an entrepreneur: a job demands-resources approach among 277 Dutch entrepreneurs in the Netherlands. The study investigated how entrepreneurs relate to their work-related strain and work engagement, as well as their feelings of subjective success. Structural equation model was used for the analysis and results of the study showed that work-related strain is related to both less personal and less financial subjective business success. The findings suggested that, if entrepreneurs can learn to deal effectively with job demands and work-related strain they can achieve an important competitive advantage over other entrepreneurs. It recommended that policy makers need to get more information about how to assist business owners in eliminating and preventing work-related strain in order to achieve higher financial and personal success.

Talreja (2017) conducted a research on women entrepreneurship and work-life balance in India. The objective of the study was to examine how women entrepreneurs maintain a balance between the household and entrepreneurial work. A sample of 80 women entrepreneurs was selected randomly from the Kota district of Rajasthan and the primary data are collected through the questionnaire. The study found out that most of the women are overwhelmed by the conflicts that arise from domestic and entrepreneurial duties. It recommended that family members of the women entrepreneurs should encourage them by sharing the household responsibilities, giving them moral support and making suitable adjustment for smooth running of their firms.

### Methodology

This study adopted a cross sectional research design to evaluate and measure the impact of work-life balance on business growth of female entrepreneurs in South-Western Nigeria. This study used the survey method which assisted in making data collection flexible and enabled it to gain an in-depth and a better understanding of the variables under study. The study adopted a quantitative approach. The quantitative method focused on determining the impact of work-life balance on the business growth of the female entrepreneurs. This approach also gave an opportunity for results that had a broader perspective of the research problem.

This study focused on female tailors in South-Western Nigeria as it is one of the fastest growing industries that has opened entrepreneurial opportunities, particularly for females in Nigeria. The Nigeria Union of Tailors is the association of Tailors operating in the informal sector for members who are not registered under

the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC). The population of the study comprises members of Nigeria Union of Tailors in South-Western Nigeria. However, Lagos, Oyo and Osun States were purposively selected as they accounted for over 60% of the total population in South-Western Nigeria.

The total number of female tailors registered with the association in the study area was 25,122 members and a sample of 379 respondents were selected for the study using Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Primary data were collected through the use of structured questionnaire and the data were analysed using multiple regression. The study examined work-life balance using work and family related variables which were work demands, family work load, well-being and spousal support as the independent variables while business growth was the dependent variable. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the variables of work-life balance value of 0.779 showed adequate levels of internal consistency as a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.7 and above is acceptable as reliable.



### Data Presentation and Discussion of Findings

#### Demographic Characteristics

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of the Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

Variables	Value Label	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative %
<b>Age Distribution</b>	16 -25	70	18.4	18.4
	26-35	85	22.4	40.8
	36-45	103	27.2	68.0
	46-55	73	19.3	87.3
	56 and above	48	12.7	100.0
	Total	<b>379</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Level of Education</b>	Informal education	18	4.7	4.7
	Elementary/primary sch	78	20.6	25.3
	Secondary sch	118	31.1	56.4
	Post-secondary sch	89	23.5	79.9
	Graduate	76	20.1	<b>100</b>
<b>Number of Years in Business</b>	Below 5 years	59	15.6	15.6
	6 to 10years	115	30.3	45.9
	11 to 15 years	86	22.7	68.6
	16 to 20 years	119	31.4	100
	Total	<b>379</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Duration of Membership in Association</b>	Below 5 years	63	16.6	16.6
	6 – 10 years	119	31.4	48.0
	11 – 15years	78	20.6	68.6
	16 - 20 years	119	31.4	<b>100</b>
	Total	379	<b>100</b>	

Source: Authors' Computation, 2019

Age: 18.4% of the respondents were in the age bracket 16-25, 22.4% are 26-35 years, 27.2% were between ages 36-45, and 19.3% were between 46-55, while

12.7% of the respondents were 55 years and above. It implies that the respondents are adults and are in the active age of child bearing and nurturing. This is an important contributor to decisions that relates to work-life balance.

Level of Education: 4.1% of the respondents had informal education, 20.6% elementary/primary school certificate, 31.1% secondary school certificate, 23.5% has post-secondary school certificate, and 20.1% of the female tailors/fashion designers are graduate. This reflects the demographic pattern of educational qualification among the respondents.

Number of Years in Business: 15.6% had less than 5years experience in fashion business, 30.3% has between 6-10 years' experience in business, 22.7% has 11-15 years' experience in tailoring business and 31.4% of the studied female tailors/fashion designers has 16-20 years business experience. This implies that the respondents have experience in tailoring and therefore suitable for contribution in the study of work-life balance and performance of women entrepreneurs.

Duration of Membership in Association:16.6% of the respondents were below 5 years as a member, 31.4% were between 6 – 10years, 20.6% are between 11 – 15 years and finally 31.4% were between 16 – 20 years. This indicates that a lot of the respondents have been a member of the association for a long time and are suitable for the research purpose.

Table 1 above gives demographic characteristics of the respondents and it shows that the respondents are of child bearing age. This is an important factor that put on work-life balance for women.

#### Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis One: Work-life balance does not have significant impact on business growth of female entrepreneurs in South-Western Nigeria

This research hypothesis is analysed below:

**Table 2: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.763 <sup>a</sup>	.581	.576	.03844

a. Predictors: (Constant), work demands, wellbeing, family workload, spousal support

**Source: Authors' Computation, 2019**

From the regression analysis result, it was found out that in table 2, the R value is (0.763), R square (0.581), adjusted R square is (0.576) and the standard error of estimate is (0.03844). The large value of R indicates a stronger relationship between the observed and predicted values of the variables. In other words, the R value depicts that work-life balance accounted for (76.3%) increment in business growth. This implies that the proportion of variation in the dependent variable is explained by the regression result. Hence, the value of R-square (58.1%) and value of adjusted R (57.6%) showed that the value of R square has high goodness of fit.

**Table 3:ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	68.086	4	22.695	118.066	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	49.018	278	.192		
	Total	117.104	282			

a. Dependent Variable: business growth

b. Predictors: (Constant), work demands, wellbeing, family workload, spousal support

**Source: Authors' Computation, 2019**

Furthermore, the analysis of variance in table 3 showed regression sum of square value of (68.086) which is higher than the residual sum of square value of (49.081). This implies that most of the variations in the dependent variable are accounted for by the independent variable. More so, the F calculated value of (118.066) is greater than the tabulated value of (3.90) indicating a significant relationship. In addition, the significant value of P (0.000) is smaller than (0.05) which means that the independent variable (work-life balance), to a high extent, accounted for the variations in the dependent variable (business growth). Hence, it is posited that work-life balance have significant impact on business growth.

**Table 4:Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.233	.066		3.555	.000
1 Work demands	.585	.020	.597	6.702	.000
Wellbeing	.421	.075	.447	5.611	.000
Family workload	.207	.119	.249	1.746	.082
spousal support	.461	.067	.511	5.723	.000

a. Dependent Variable: business growth

b. Predictors: (Constant), work demands, wellbeing, family workload, spousal support

**Source: Author's Computation, 2019**

Table 4 shows that 'work demands' (t-value = 6.702, p-value = 0.000) is significant at 5% level. This implies that work demands, as a result of increased sales, customer patronage and customer requests, will bring about 59.7% increment in business growth.

The result on 'well being' (t-value = 5.611, p-value = 0.000) is significant at 5% level. This implies that when female entrepreneurs are mentally, physically and psychologically balanced, they facilitate more meaningful customer interactions which bring about 44.7% increment in business growth.

The result also shows that 'family workload' (t-value = 1.746, p-value = 0.082). This implies that when family workload is not overwhelming it could bring about 24.9% improvements in business growth.

The result on 'spousal support' (t-value = 5.611, p-value = 0.000) is significant at 5% level. This implies that spousal support (emotionally, financially and spiritually) will bring about 51.1% increment in business growth.

These analyses signify that each of the variables have contributed to business growth. Hence, work-life balance have significant impact on business growth. This is in line with the findings of Dijkhuizen, et al. (2017) that entrepreneurs can achieve an important competitive advantage in their business if they can learn to deal effectively with job demands and work-related strain. Also Talreja (2017) found out that most women are overwhelmed by the conflicts that arise from domestic and entrepreneurial duties which should be balanced to achieve the desired growth.

### Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, work-life balance is an important phenomenon especially for female entrepreneurs. They are solely responsible for the success of their businesses and as such their business growth is greatly influenced by how well they manage their work demands, family workload and personal lives. From the study, it was concluded that balancing work and family demands with other necessities of life have significant effect on business growth.

The study therefore recommends that female entrepreneurs should strive to maintain work-life balance as this will help them manage their work roles, family roles and personal life and also improve their business growth.

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