**Work-life Balance and State of Mental Health among Professional Working Women**

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***Abstract -*** With the widening exposure of society’s evolution from a simple to a complex life which gradually began and rapidly changed its position with the hands of technology. It expanded its light upon different dimensions of our social environment. The present scenario highlights how the role of working professionals has influenced immense deviations throughout the competitive era. It keeps work life united with personal life and affects stress on personal and professional fronts. Likely, work-life balance is a requirement for working women to maintain a good quality of life. The present study will attempt to comprise working professionals from diverse sectors with the process of qualitative research method. It will emphasize how women professionals regulate the equilibrium in work-life balance and give importance to mental health working in different sectors. Secondly, it analyzes how work-life balance is creating a havoc challenge for women which creates immense pressure on their mental health. However, it explores the remedies and the mental support they are getting from the organization and close ones so they can lead a good life. Similarly, it undertakes a greater consequence for working women transversely the world which helps to confess the dilemmas of juggling their multiple societal roles.

***Keywords: Work-life Balance, Gender roles, Professional women, Work pressure, Mental health.***

**INTRODUCTION:** Broadening exposure to modern society has gradually begun and continuously changed its position with the hands of technology. It has expanded its lights upon diverse domains of the social environment in a massive manner. Likely, after the 18th century, people have ideally developed thinking processes in rational ways and from that the concept of ‘Evolution’ has taken a gradual place. It describes how society rapidly transformed from a primitive to a modern era. With the rapid progression of global technological advancement where people are more focused on ‘Individualism’. So, it defines how the modern era has influenced in spheres of life of people on an everyday basis. Likely, in this scenario, women’s revelation to different sectors is rising higher in urban settings. This has widely opened new domains and raised aspirations of their personal growth. It creates economic pressure which influences the decision of women to enter the workforce and try to flourish along with men.

Here, the present scenario highlights how the role of working professional women is continuously trying to maintain the equilibrium of mental health and work-life balance. It explores how ‘Mental Health’ plays a vital role in our society. Firstly, ‘Mental Health’ refers to the state of mind of an individual which reflects on the cognitive process, behavior, and feelings. It is a dynamic progression that mainly influences individuals' social and working environment. Likely, they are continuously trying to regulate their duties and adapt to social life. It causes immense pressure on their mental state and creates symptoms like Stress, Anxiety, and Depression which have become the common issues among women workers in both private and public sectors. Here, ‘Gender roles’ play a prior role in considering the work and how different domains of life are circulated and performed. Similarly, ‘Work-life Balance’ is the main aspect that is interrelated with mental health, especially among women professionals. Here, the term ‘Work-life’ balance refers to an individual's perceptions of life in which people try to juggle between work and personal life.

This paper will enhance how ‘Work-life balance aims to fetch behavioral changes within the individual through different reasons, especially in women’s lives. This complex world brings negative impacts upon behavior in which it becomes difficult to cope with multiple responsibilities. This creates havoc pressure as well as stress upon them and it always triggers in mind how they will balance these two domains. On the other hand, women are also playing a foremost role in the economic workforce in today’s society. However, it highlights a positive change in regulating better work performance and dual responsibilities still ponder heavily upon how the working professionals perform their roles in work and home spheres. It has been measured as crucial to their mental state, greatly impacting their performance. What are the remedies in which they cope and motivate themselves from that mental state? Therefore, it analyzes the impact of the ‘Dual Burden’ responsibilities of women which have been portrayed to each individual, and how women workers handle setbacks and challenges that repeatedly rise to a clash of interests in their social lives.

 ***Innovation and Expansion of Global Era***

This context depicts “Social Innovation in the Context of Modernization” depicts how people have witnessed the diverse phases of evolution from the traditional to the modern period. (Lubelcova Gabriela, 2012). In the present era, the impacts of social innovations and broadening exposure to the global world significantly influence the factors that lead to social change, through the paradigms of changes in several approaches that transcend its focus with the existing societal practices. Firstly, it is going to define the term ‘Innovation’. The word innovation can transform its qualities into a new innovative manner. In which people can express wider facets of social development with the hands of modernization. On the other side, the term ‘Modernization’ depicts that all aspects take their place in a more advanced pattern where all the social institutions perform their excellence in a better way. It highlights how society has evolved in a massive transition from the primitive period where people had much more sense of the strong feelings of integration but on the opposite adjacent the modern phase essentially tries to make people more accustomed to the essence of technological advancements. The process entails diverse corners after the emergence of industrialization and the enlightenment period marked that people have developed their thinking process in rational perspectives. Likely, it connects theories of the ‘Division of Labour’ (Durkheim,1893) on how the labor is being divided among co-workers It focuses upon modernity where people are getting much more specialized in their professions but the interdependency on the different professions is increasing to a greater extent. The sociology of modernization addresses the enlarging connections between the state and development is presiding over the functions in each social sphere. Now, with the extent of modernization, information technology has revolutionized the existing gathered information and emerged many new social interaction patterns in which individuals are stepping into more technologically equipped social life. Hence, Social innovations have influenced people’s lives on an everyday basis in which the competitive mindset has taken place among both men and women. Similarly, the eagerness to enter ‘the workforce’ has been explored in a detailed manner in the next scenario.

***Gender Role and Work -Force.***

This context illustrates how ‘Gender Roles’ and ‘Workforce’ are mutually interdependent. Here, the term ‘Gender Roles’ is defined as socially constructed in which both men and women play the role accordingly to perceive their notions in every sphere. Likely, this perspective enhances that here (Ann Oakley,1972) differentiates the concept of gender from sex. It is purely constructed by the social environment from an early phase of socialization. Here, ‘Sex’ is purely ascribed in nature. But ‘Gender’ demonstrates that individuals achieved particular traits, and statuses of social life within the period. On the other adjacent, the progression of the ‘Workforce’ addresses the process of recognizing the desire and need to enter into the labor force and how to improve economic productivity in the global world. Here, the workplace environment influences and tries to bring out the reflection of individual performance. This creates a rational process to concentrate on efficient tasks to compete and juggle in this ‘iron cage’ world.

It enhances the two broader social concepts ‘Gender roles and ‘Workforce’ to maintain the equilibrium and how women's labor force has entered into this competitive world along with men. In this context, it illustrates the rapid increase in women's labor force participation in developing countries. It marked the trends and causes that drive women’s engagement in the labor market because of the need and eagerness to earn along with men. It opens the diverse scope to access to higher education and the widening exposure to employment opportunities. In developing countries, it is considered that women’s labor force contribution plays a coping mechanism to support economic growth. It focuses on a far more important concern where the quality of work that women engaged in the workforce. It illustrates the inter-relationship between the socio-economic and demographic factors and how women participate in this world where the work sector is multifaceted. It enhances the rate of global perspectives where the female labor force rate has remained stable. The total working-age population is slightly declining from 52.2% in the year of 1992 to 51.4% in 2012 (ILO). However, it has been observed that 370.5 million women have amalgamated into the labor market, where women engaged 39.8% of the labor force globally.

***‘Dual Burden Errands’ of Work-life Balance and Mental State Among Women***

This section of the study illustrates how work-life balance and the mental state of the individual are important to balance which greatly affects the social environment daily. Here, the term ‘work-life balance’ which generally defines “satisfaction and good functioning at work and home with a minimum of role conflict” (Clark, 2002). When the working hours of women have been decreased from private life hours while charging the work intensity is similarly high. Thus, half of the working women are struggling with disequilibrium and it forms a burden as well as stress, obesity, anxiety, panic, and many other changes in their physical appearance. On the other side, it could be the main negative impact on social domains of life. Every individual needs to focus on both personal and professional life equally. Where they are bound to compete with the increasing demands that society is constantly putting the burden on them which leads to conflict in their mental state. Likely, in the context which enhanced that work-life balance which meets the ability to gratify the three basic spheres of life which are ‘work’, ‘family’, and ‘personal life’ (Delecta, 2011). It also opines that the policies of work-life balance suggest how the organization gives a broader scope for the workers to be flexible in working patterns, in which they can regulate the office work and the responsibilities of their interests. (Armstrong,2005).

In this context, this study illustrates the ‘Dual Burden’ where women in society have been depicted from the early phase of life (Hoschild,1989). It shows how a woman is portrayed to take the challenges of being a mother in her private realm as well as when balancing professional responsibilities. This perspective focuses on the “Second Shift” which refers to the term where working mothers are constantly juggling to regulate a proper balance on both aspects of life. It reflects in this highly competitive world where women equally enter into the workforce and they also seek the upliftment of careers equally. However, on the other aspect where our social setting is constantly putting social criteria upon women, it is a huge pressure that creates an impact on their mental state. In this context, it connects the theory of Goffman’s ‘Social Presentation of Everyday Life’ where people perform everyday tasks based on back and front stage. Similarly, working professionals are constantly trying to perform their best in the family as a ‘Backstage’ and as well as dealing with the work fronts and presenting to be the best version of themselves as a ‘Front stage’. Hence, the present scenario shows that the majority of women are indulging in stress, anxiety, and depression. Likely, it is quite difficult to adjust to the social setbacks and repeatedly on an everyday basis.

***Workplace Setting in Public and Private Sector***

Here it reflects on how the workplace setting has been influenced by women. In contrast, the public sector organizations emphasize a lesser amount of making a profit and offer a stable working social environment. On the other hand, it compares where private sector organizations are all about making more profit and can be less reliable due to competition in this era. In the public sector where women employees have fixed unchanging roles but in the private sector employees are more flexible. Hence due to the advancements in technology and globalization where foreign countries welcome more foreign clients and many industries are rapidly expanding in the private sector.

***The mental health state of working women in the Private and Public sector***

In this context, it enhances how ‘Mental Health’ plays a significant impact in an individual's everyday life. In the present era where it has been a dilemma among women professionals to balance their work life and mental health. Here, the term ‘Mental Health’ signifies the state that is connected to stress, psychological problems, and illness, and the constricted term has evolved with the passing days. According to the World Health Organization, it is coined as “A state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and can contribute to his or her community” (WHO,2005). The present paper aims to discover the relationship between work-life balance and the mental health of working professionals in private and public organizations through it displays the outcomes, impacts, and mediators of a family treatise. It shows the diverse dimensions that have inclined to individual's life with some factors like ‘Anxiety’, ‘Stress’, ‘Depression’ and other mental well-being. In this context it assessed the advancement of career progression of women has rapidly taken a central role in India’s labor force globally (R. Balaji,2014). Here, it has been analyzed those women who are having children were not as much of committed to their jobs as compared to the women who are without having children. It illustrates that work-related stress is a more impacted factor as well as its influence on the family domain and it causes stress, anxiety, and other psychological issues. The work-life balance is creating a conflict among working professionals where it affects their work performance in poorly manner. On the other aspect, it is noted that the causes of conflict to regulate both personal and professional fronts are mainly visible in married women’s lives. It is tough for those sections of women who are constantly struggling to face challenges and setbacks in everyday life. Thus, the studies of work-life balance also delve analysis of diverse perspectives in further scenarios.

 ***Work-life Balance and Satisfaction of Employees in Organizations***

It explores to illustrates the relationship between work-life balance and the satisfaction of employees receiving from the organization (Kamalanabhan.S, 2011). It has been shown that the exploratory study has been conducted based on 210 employees of IT organizations on two different perspectives: ‘Work-life Balance’ and ‘Employee Satisfaction’. Here, work-life balance plays a vital role that influencing the performance of employees on jobs and mental satisfaction. It is mainly focused on working women, particularly mothers who have to fight for mental peace as well as work clarity from both work and family spheres. Thus, the rewards and appreciation strategy reflect the index of job satisfaction which is defined as a respectable initiative to maintain equilibrium in both work and non-work domains. Where it is observed to reduce stress caused by work pressure and it also creates mistakes that turn into opportunities in a more enthusiastic manner. However, a positive social environment and work-life balance are the mediators for each professional woman where they can convey more clarity from organizations and personal fronts.

***Factors and Coping strategies of mental health state among women***

This section of the study explores how working professionals cope and manage to balance their mental health state regularly. In this present era, ‘Stress’ in the workplace has become a major issue both for the individual as well as for the organization. Which negatively impacts employee's work performance and physical conditions. Due to the process of modernization where global advancements in technological settings expand its exposure to the current working environment. It is observed that employees are working for long durations to meet the targeted goals or desires of the organization. Though, working for long hours where work stressors are increasing day by day the risk factors are preoccupied as psychological issues, anxiety, depression, and panic. Here, professional women are facing more difficulties and stress in facing setbacks regularly from family spheres, work overload, job insecurity, role conflict, and many others which constantly push them towards many challenges. This risk issue leads to absenteeism in the office, mood disorders, lack of interest in activities, and frustrated behavior toward others while interacting in social situations. It illustrated that it also includes sexual harassment from the workforce is likely to occur more in young females (Street et al,2007). However, the inter-relationship between working women’s work stress and personal stress has been consistently documented in the study. In further scenarios will engage in the discussion of how working women engage in coping strategies. Here, the term ‘Coping Strategies’ refers to the constant changing of cognitive and behavioral efforts that engage to solve the internal as well as external desires and needs of the individual capacity in which they can balance both personal and professional fronts decently. However, some of the strategies which have been observed and gathered from the above research like:

* It addresses the stress experienced by women from the workforce which need to be considered and focus on that particular issue to resolve the stress.
* The acknowledgment of stress is considered as an important role in regulating overall well-being and enabling them to maintain mental state, flexibility, and emotional stability.
* Every working professional should maintain time management skills in every domain to help them balance personal and professional issues equally.
* It enhances prioritizing self-care activities like meditation, chanting, reading favorite novels, and exercises regularly which help them to reduce stress and also for better concentration in all activities.
* It focuses on building a strong network of family, colleagues, and friends in which individuals can come out from their disturbed mental state which allows them to regulate life in positive ways.
* It enhances that each office/organization seeks support for those employees who are constantly struggling to fight with their mental health and it should be considered as a vital issue. So, they can easily share their thoughts and problems with their coworkers.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. It aims to study how women professionals regulate the equilibrium in work-life and the importance of mental health working in different sectors.
2. It analyzes how work-life balance creates a challenge and immense pressure on working women’s mental health.
3. To find out the problems faced by public and private sector working professional women.
4. It explores what are the remedies and mental support they are getting from the organization and closed ones.

**METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of collecting detailed secondary narratives of the “Work-life balance and State of Mental Health among working professional women” has emerged to frame a study with the path of Qualitative research. This research paper has focused on finding the state and the equilibrium of the ‘Mental State’ and ‘Work-life Balance’ among both private and public sector working professional women. It has been observed how rapidly society has evolved from a traditional to a modern society. This present study focuses on the selection process of the respondents which was based on objectives. The research paper has illustrated some diverse perspectives with the method of Thematic analysis. Due to the specified time limitation of the whole study, it was not possible to collect the responses from the respondents on a larger basis in a quantitative manner. This whole section of the present study has been thematically analyzed using secondary sources to gather the required data. However, with the guidance of journals, articles, and reports it has been pragmatically used to meet the criteria of this relevant research paper.

**ANALYSIS**

The above study of the relevant paper has examined the state of mental health and work-life balance among working professionals which has been divided into two sections one in the Private Sector and one Public Sector to analyze the comparisons of the mental health state due to work-related stress and family issues. From the theme ‘Innovation and Expansion of global era’ it has been observed how rapidly society has evolved from a simple to a complex one where the impacts of social innovations have greatly influenced several approaches that transcend its focus with the societal practices. Here, from this global expansion where individuals are becoming much more advanced in each sector the term ‘Self’ arises, and how the transition to a complex society is more evident. Secondly, the theme ‘Gender Role and Work Force’ analyzed how society has been socially constructed by both men and women to play a significant role in perceiving their notions in every sphere. On the other, the progression of the ‘Workforce’ has given equal chances for both genders to work and improve economic productivity which creates a rational process to focus on efficient tasks to compete and maintain equilibrium in the world of ‘iron-cage’. Thirdly, Dual-Burden Errands of Work-life Balance and Mental state among women suggest how work-life balance and mental state are mutually interdependent and affect the social environment on an everyday basis. When working hours puts the pressure on mind constantly it affects negatively on the working professionals. Similarly, it has been quite difficult for those working professionals to adapt to this juggling condition and hence they are restricted to ‘Dual Burden’, and it's difficult to cope with the situation easily. However, the workplace setting in the private sector has constricted and it has been influenced by women. In contrast, the public sector organizations emphasize a lesser amount of profit and offer a stable working social environment. Fourthly, it has been enhanced how ‘Mental Health’ played a major influencer and it has been a dilemma among women professionals to balance their work life and mental health. Thus, it showed that work-related stress is a more impacted factor and similarly, the family domain also causes more stress, anxiety, and depression. Lastly, from the mentioned theme it has been analyzed that from the constant pressurized working and personal sphere, they always try to seek out support from close acquaintances. Thus, it is the responsibility of each organization to take equal care of employee’s mental health so they can compete and give their best to every task in a better manner.

 It has been examined the rate where 85% of the public sector women employees do not have any problems regarding their workplace settings. On the other, in the private sector where 54% of women face challenges regarding their jobs. It shows that the symptoms of stress, anxiety, and psychological issues are more prone to women workers in the private sector as compared to public sector women. It has been examined that work-life balance among working professional mothers in the private sector creates a conflict among unmarried women on both personal and professional fronts. Therefore, it indicates that mental health problems are much more evident in private-sector working women than in public-sector working women.

**CONCLUSION**

From the above discussion, it has been concluded that the topic “The state of mental health and work-life balance among working professional women” has analyzed the importance of work-life balance for professional women in institutional settings. Here, work-life balance has evolved as a vital predictor of mental health which needs to focus on the diverse strategies to maintain a healthy work-life balance among working women. Likely, as the comparison highlighted in the context where the work-life balance of professionals working in the public and private sectors, there is a difference in the perspective of personal life fronts enhancement. The reason could be a supportive social environment is likely affected by public sector organizations in terms of policies and regulations for women (Buelens & Broeck, 2007). In another context, where mental state of working women in the private sector experienced more psychological issues due to a highly stressed working environment than public sector working women. Thus, this is a major concern for the private sector organization to take care of each employee's mental health condition and to provide a better work-life balance so that they can perform better and stay healthy. However, it is high time to change societal notions of working professionals in the workplace settings of private sector organizations to implement some work-life balance policies and programs effectively. They can compete with other sectors productively and balance the notion of ‘dual burden’ in a better perspective.

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