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STRUCTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IN INDIA: A NARRATIVE

Editors

Dr. A SARAVANAN
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Structural and Institutional Dimensions of
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in India: A Narrative



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Structural and Institutional Dimensions of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in India: A Narrative

edited by Dr. A Saravanan & Mr. M P Sharath Kumar

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Preface

The pursuit of sustainable development has emerged as a top priority for countries all over the world in a world with complex challenges. At the heart of this global endeavour are the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a visionary roadmap aimed at addressing critical issues such as poverty, inequality, climate change, and environmental degradation. As one of the world's most populous and diverse nations, India stands at the forefront of this transformative agenda. This book entitled "Structural and Institutional Dimensions of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in India: A Narrative" is a collective exploration of the structural and institutional aspects that underpin India's progress towards achieving the SDGs. It seeks to unravel the intricate tapestry of policies, governance structures, and socio-economic dynamics that shape India's sustainable development journey. Drawing on a rich tapestry of research, data, and narratives, this volume offers a comprehensive analysis of India's pursuit of the SDGs. It engages with the challenges, successes, and future prospects, shedding light on the intricate web of opportunities and constraints that define India's path towards a more equitable, prosperous, and sustainable future.

The edited volume of the book is a collection of research papers from eminent scholars and academicians presented at the ICSSR Sponsored One day National seminar on "Structural and Institutional Dimensions of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in India: A Narrative".

Our due acknowledgement is to the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi, for the financial support to organise the above seminar. Our sincere thanks to the Secretary, Principal, Vice Principals and Faculty members, PSG College of Arts & Science, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu for their timely help at various stages to bring out this volume.

Dr. A. Saravanan
Mr. M P Sharath Kumar

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INTRODUCTION

Achieving a satisfactory work-life balance is a universal challenge, but it often takes on distinct dimensions for men and women due to societal expectations, care giving roles, and workplace dynamics. Our society in earlier days was completely under male domination, who provided the family with all the needed resources, while women were in charge of household duties including child care, child rearing, and home management. As a result of increased education and financial advancements, women have embraced a variety of professions to pursue successful careers on par with men. Working women hold a prominent place in society and contribute significantly to human progress. However, the attitude towards women and their role in family has remained the same, as even today taking care of the family and children is considered as their primary responsibility. They need to balance between the competing demands of their personal and professional lives. For women working today, finding a balance between work and personal life is crucial. The physical and mental well-being of working women is vast and multifaceted, reflecting the complex interplay of factors that influence women's health in the workplace. The present study examines the impact of physical and mental health on well-being of working women.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mensah, A. (2021) investigated the mutual relationships between job stress, social support, and mental well-being among working adults in Europe with particular focus on gender differences. The study inspected whether job stress is indirectly related to mental well-being via social support, and whether the direct and indirect effects of job stress on mental well-being are moderated by gender. In addition, the study also explores whether social support mediated the relationship of mental well-being on job stress. The results of the study revealed that job stress had a direct and negative relationship with mental well-being, and that women had higher effects as compared to men. Furthermore, the study confirmed that social support played a significant mediating role in the relationship between job stress and mental well-being, but it did not differ by gender. Also, social support acted as a mediator in the relationship of mental well-being on job stress.

Sinha S(2017) made a study on Multiple roles of working women and psychological well-being with an aim to explicate the work-family conflict and the social support on the psychological well-being of the working women. The study found that working women scored lower on PGI(Patient Global Impressions scale) Health Questionnaire than homemakers, which was statistically highly significant, indicating that working women had higher psychological well-being than homemakers or nonworking women. On the assessment of PGI and SSQ(Speech, Spatial and Qualities of Hearing), scores revealed that women in dual-earner families perceived lower social support as compared to those of single-earner families.

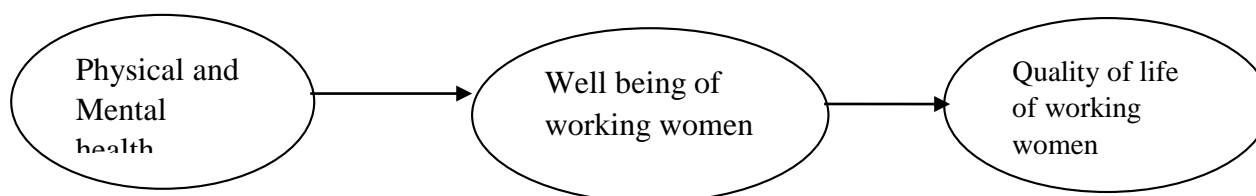
A study by Dudhatra RR (2012) revealed that carrying out duties and responsibilities both at home and workplace overstrains a married working woman, thereby leading to various psychological problems like role conflict, job strain, mental fatigue, stress, anxiety, frustration, depression, anger, phobias, and other social and emotional distress. All of these problems can interactively affect the mental well-being of working women and more so in

married working women. It also revealed that working women have poor mental health and higher level of depression compared to nonworking women

Research gap:

The present study helps to identify how the physical and mental health impacts the well being of working women and in turn how physical and mental well being affects the quality of life of working women.

OUTLINE OF THE STUDY



OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the factors affecting the physical and mental health of working women.
- To examine the impact of physical and mental health on the well being of working women and its corresponding effect on the quality of life of working women.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Factors affecting physical and mental health of working women:

Though women work parallel with men in work place, women play multiple roles such as child rears, parents, teachers, caretakers of their elderly parents, and many more, which becomes very much tiring and complicated for them. It is the added responsibility and burden of chores that add to daily hassles or stress for them. As like others, physical and mental healths are both crucial components of overall well-being of working women, and they have a profound impact on various aspects of personal life.

A variety of factors, many of which might change depending on personal circumstances, career, and lifestyle, affect the physical health of working women. Some significant elements that frequently impact the physical health of working women are

- **Nature of job:** A woman's physical health may be significantly impacted by the nature of her profession. Heavy lifting, repetitive motion, extended periods of sitting or standing, exposure to toxic materials, and intense physical activity can all contribute to a variety of health problems over time.
- **Work-related stress:** Chronic work-related stress can manifest physically and lead to conditions like high blood pressure, heart disease, and a weakened immune system. Women in demanding or high-pressure jobs may be more susceptible to stress-related health issues.
- **Working Hours:** Extended working hours and overtime can disrupt sleep patterns, increase stress, and reduce the time available for physical activity, all of which can negatively impact physical health. Women who work irregular hours or night shifts may experience disruptions to their circadian rhythms, which can lead to sleep disturbances, weight gain, and increased risk of chronic diseases.
- **Physical Activity:** Sedentary jobs can contribute to a lack of physical activity, which is associated with obesity, cardiovascular problems, and a range of other health issues. Encouraging regular breaks and exercise at work can help mitigate this.
- **Food intake:** Lack of nutritious diet and skipping of food might lead to poor nutrition which contributes to various health problems, including weight gain and metabolic disorders.
- **Self-care:** The ability to balance work with personal life and self-care is crucial for physical health. Overwork and a lack of time for relaxation and exercise can contribute to physical health problems.

The mental health of employees is not only a matter of individual concern but also a significant determinant of an organization's success. Mental and emotional health is closely linked to physical health. As the lines between personal and professional life starts to fade, the impact of work on mental health cannot be ignored. Research consistently shows that

women in the workplace may experience higher levels of stress and anxiety compared to their male counterparts. High levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders can manifest as physical symptoms and weaken the immune system. Conversely, maintaining good mental well-being promotes better physical health. Women are at a higher risk of mental disorders such as depression, neurotic disorders, anxiety disorders, and neurosis. (National Mental Health Survey, 2016). The mental health of working women is influenced by the following factors:

- **Workload and Stress:** Heavy workloads, tight deadlines, and excessive job demands can lead to chronic stress, a major contributor to mental health issues.
- **Work-Life Balance:** Striking a balance between work and personal life is crucial. Overworking can erode mental well-being.
- **Job Security and Economic Stability:** Financial concerns and job insecurity can take a toll on mental health.
- **Job Satisfaction and Engagement:** Employees who find their work meaningful and fulfilling tend to have better mental well-being.
- **Workplace Culture:** A supportive and inclusive workplace culture fosters positive mental health, while a toxic one can have detrimental effects.
- **Workplace Discrimination and Harassment:** Women may face discrimination, including gender bias, sexual harassment, and micro aggressions in the workplace. Such experiences can negatively impact their mental well-being and overall job satisfaction.

Physical and mental health- the core determinants of well being

Good health and wellbeing can be a core enabler of employee engagement and organisational performance. Physical and mental well being is interdependent and influences each other. When one dimension of well-being is out of balance, the other dimension gets affected. Wellness is not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. It is rather a dynamic and conscious development of the whole self associated with intentions, choices, and actions leading toward an optimal state of well-being so that instead of surviving, we are thriving. Physical wellbeing of working women helps them to maintain a healthy quality of life allowing them to do most of the daily activities (both personal and professional duties) without undue fatigue or physical stress. Mental wellbeing refers to feeling good about oneself and the world around them, which includes both personal and professional, whilst being able to cope with the normal stresses of life. Mental wellbeing is about much more than just the absence of mental disorder. It includes all aspects of mental health, emotional state and well-being, as well as how they interact. In turn, mental wellness influences how one think, feel, and behave in their daily life and physical activity is a great way to keep you both physically healthy as well as improving your mental wellbeing. Research shows that doing exercise releases feel-good chemicals called endorphins in the brain. Even a short burst of 10 minutes brisk walking can improve your mental alertness, energy and mood. To strive for wellness is to take a proactive approach by working women by learning how to be well in each dimension and taking action to build wellness-affirming habits, routines, and coping strategies.

Impact of physical and mental well being on Quality of life (QoL)

Quality of life (QoL or QOL) refers to how well a person lives. Standard of living is mostly associated with one's income and only has a minimum effect on quality of life. But quality of life goes beyond one's standard of living and includes the totality of one's happiness, health, leisure, vitality and income as well. It is the perceived quality of an individual's daily life, that is, an assessment of their well-being or lack thereof. As far as working women are concerned, quality of life encompasses various aspects of an individual's overall well-being, happiness, and satisfaction with their life circumstances. A well balanced personal and personal life indicates a better quality of life. Physical and mental health and well-being are key indicators of quality of life, as they are closely interconnected and impact individuals, communities, and societies as a whole. When physical and mental health of working women is correctly balanced and well-maintained, they are more likely to lead fulfilling and satisfying lives.

CONCLUSION

The well-being of working women is intensely entwined with their physical and mental health. Recognizing and addressing the complex relationship between these two dimensions of health is essential for creating workplaces that foster holistic well-being. By implementing supportive policies, promoting healthy lifestyles, and reducing workplace stressors, organizations and society can contribute to the overall well-being of working women which in turn improves the quality of life of working women. This can be done by conducting workplace wellness programs highlighting the importance of wellness initiatives addressing both physical and mental health, including stress management workshops and fitness programs, making flexible work arrangements by discussing the benefits of flexible work hours and remote work options in promoting work-life balance and reducing stress and also by providing counseling services and employee assistance programs, to help working women manage their mental health.

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