

10th International Conference on
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**Women Work and Well Being: Balancing Economic Participation
with Social Responsibility**

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Abstract

Women today make significant contributions to economic growth, yet many continue to navigate the dual demands of professional work and family responsibilities, with this balance often shaping their overall well-being. In urban contexts, where tradition and modern opportunities coexist, women's experiences of work-life balance provide important insights into both personal and societal change. This study takes a close look at the experiences of women in an urban setting shaped by both tradition and modern opportunities and the research examines how they manage work-life balance and how this balance or imbalance shapes their happiness and satisfaction.

This study focuses on women in Mangalore city, a setting where classrooms, IT offices, banks, small shops, and informal workspaces together reflect the diverse roles women occupy. By examining how women balance economic participation with family and social responsibilities, the research explores how this balance or imbalance influences their happiness, satisfaction, and quality of life.

Existing literature has examined women's economic roles in low- and middle-income countries, cross-cultural perspectives on work-life balance, participation trends in the labor force, and the impact of workplace policies and employment laws on women professionals. While these studies have offered valuable insights at national and global levels, less attention has been given to women lived experiences in particular urban contexts. This study addresses that gap by focusing on the everyday realities of women in Mangalore, where cultural expectations and economic opportunities intersect.

The research draws on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through a simple random sampling method, capturing responses from women employed across a wide range of sectors in Mangalore. Secondary data, drawn from academic studies, reports, and

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policy documents, was used to frame the analysis and situate the findings within broader debates on women, work, and well-being.

The findings reveal notable sectoral variations where women in formal employment, particularly in IT and banking, often benefit from structured workplace policies, maternity leave provisions, and occasional flexibility, while these advantages are accompanied by longer working hours and heightened time pressures, which often intensify conflicts between professional and family responsibilities. By contrast, women in informal and small-scale occupations enjoy greater autonomy over work hours but lack institutional protections, leaving them vulnerable to economic insecurity. In both contexts, persistent gendered expectations, disproportionate household responsibilities, and limited access to affordable childcare services emerged as common stressors undermining women's well-being.

The study concludes that women's well-being in Mangalore is deeply tied to the availability and strength of support systems within families, workplaces, and communities. The research highlights the need for inclusive workplace policies along with affordable childcare facilities and awareness initiatives that can reduce the dual burden on women.

Keywords - *Women's Work, Work-Life Balance, Well-being, Economic Participation, Mangalore City*

Introduction

The role of women in modern society has experienced a remarkable change, marked by their growing involvement in economic activities while still fulfilling their ongoing duties within the family and community.

Women today serve as both vital contributors to the workforce and economic growth, while simultaneously fulfilling primary caregiving roles within their families and communities. This dual responsibility often demands a delicate balance between professional duties and societal expectations, significantly influencing their overall well-being.

The challenge of balancing economic engagement with social duties presents both opportunities and obstacles. In contrast, financial autonomy boosts women's self-assurance, decision-making authority, and social standing. Conversely, the ongoing pressures of household duties, societal conventions, and gender roles can result in stress, an imbalance between work and life, and emotional distress. These elements, consequently, collectively negatively affect women's physical, mental, and social health.

This study aims to explore how women navigate the complex relationship between their economic engagement and social responsibilities, focusing on the difficulties they face, the consequences, and the strategies they employ for their overall well-being. By shedding light on these dynamics, the research intends to offer insights that can guide policies, workplace practices, and social support systems that enable women to thrive in both their personal and professional lives.

Objectives

To analyse the challenges faced by women in balancing professional responsibilities with family, social, and personal obligations.

To evaluate the impact of work-life balance on women's physical, emotional, and social well-being.

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To identify the coping strategies and support systems women adopt to manage both economic participation and social responsibilities.

To propose opportunities and recommendations for creating policies and practices that promote women's holistic well-being in both professional and personal spheres.

Review of Literature

Tamanna Nazmi and Sindhu N (2025). This research emphasises that each woman's experience of balancing professional and personal life is unique, shaped by her individual circumstances and societal expectations. Their study provides insights into how women workers navigate these dual responsibilities and identifies strategies that enable them to thrive, offering valuable implications for employers seeking to support female employees. Similarly.

Vazeerjan Begum (2024) explored the impact of work-family conflict on women's well-being, job satisfaction, and organisational performance. Drawing on the Spillover and Facilitation theories, the study revealed how work-related stress can extend into personal life, while strong support systems can alleviate such pressures. The research focused on women administrators in the UAE's higher education sector, contributing to the development of gender-inclusive policies and interventions that promote well-being and organisational effectiveness.

Dr Payal Mahendrasinh Mahida and Ms. Suchita Chauhan (2023). In this study, it was found that supportive workplaces, flexible schedules, and cooperative family environments are crucial for women's well-being and job performance. They emphasised that an organisation's success is closely tied to employee satisfaction, making work-life balance a cornerstone of sustainable growth.

Abdul Jalil et al. (2023) highlighted how job insecurity undermines work-life balance and mental health in Malaysia, noting that uncertainty about employment leads to anxiety, sleep disturbances, and strained family relationships. They recommended transparent communication and employee support initiatives to mitigate these effects. Collectively, these studies underscore that achieving work-life balance is not merely a personal issue but a structural and organisational imperative, essential for promoting women's empowerment, mental health, and workplace equity.

Kumar and Rao (2020) further explored these dynamics in India's IT sector, showing how personal factors such as age, marital status, and dependents influence women's ability to manage multiple roles. Younger women were more adaptable, while married women with children faced greater strain, especially in workplaces lacking flexible arrangements or childcare support.

Mensah (2021), in a cross-national study of 35 European countries, confirmed persistent gender disparities in work-related stress and psychological well-being, attributing them to cultural expectations and unequal domestic responsibilities. The study called for stronger governmental and organisational measures—such as paid parental leave and affordable childcare—to foster gender equality.

Hasan et al. (2020) focused on healthcare professionals, a group known for their demanding and high-stress work environments. Their study showed that doctors and nurses who managed to maintain some personal time and rest were far more satisfied with their jobs and experienced better mental health. Interestingly, even when motivation levels were low, a good work-life balance helped prevent burnout. The authors emphasised the importance of supportive workplaces that value rest, fairness, and staff well-being.

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Scope of the Study

This study focuses on women living in **Mangalore City**, which includes women from different professions such as teaching, healthcare, business, corporate offices, and service sectors. The aim is to understand how these women balance their professional commitments with their family and social responsibilities in their everyday lives. Since the study is limited to women in Mangalore, the experiences and insights gathered reflect the unique social and cultural environment of the city. Therefore, the results may differ in other regions where lifestyles and support systems vary.

Need for the Study

In today's world, more women are stepping into the workforce and contributing meaningfully to economic growth and development. Yet, alongside their professional roles, many continue to carry the main responsibility for family care and social obligations. Balancing these two demanding worlds often brings challenges such as stress, emotional strain, and a sense of imbalance in their overall well-being.

This study seeks to understand these real-life experiences — how women manage their work and family responsibilities, the pressures they face, and the ways they cope with them. It also aims to explore how maintaining this balance influences their physical, emotional, and social health. The findings of this study will offer useful insights for creating more supportive workplace policies, counselling programs, and social systems that help women lead healthier, more fulfilling lives both at work and at home.

Research Methodology

For this study, both primary and secondary data were used to understand how women balance their work and social responsibilities while maintaining their overall well-being.

Primary Data

The primary data was collected through Google Forms (G-Forms) distributed among working women in Mangalore City. The questionnaire included a mix of structured and semi-structured questions designed to gather insights into their work-life balance, challenges faced, and coping strategies adopted in their daily lives. A total of **110** responses were collected for this study.

The sampling technique used was random sampling, where the form was shared with working women from various professions across Mangalore. This approach helped obtain diverse and genuine responses representing women from various occupational backgrounds. The collected data were then **analysed using the Traffic Light Analysis method**, which helped categorise the findings into positive, moderate, and negative trends for better understanding and interpretation. The sample size of 110 respondents, though sufficient for preliminary insights, may not fully capture the diversity of working women in Mangalore. Furthermore, as the participation was voluntary, the sample may reflect the views of women more willing to share their experiences, potentially limiting the representativeness of the findings.

Secondary Data

The secondary data was gathered from research articles, journals, magazines, books, reports, and credible online sources related to women's employment, gender roles, and work-life balance. These references supported the analysis by providing theoretical perspectives and comparative studies,

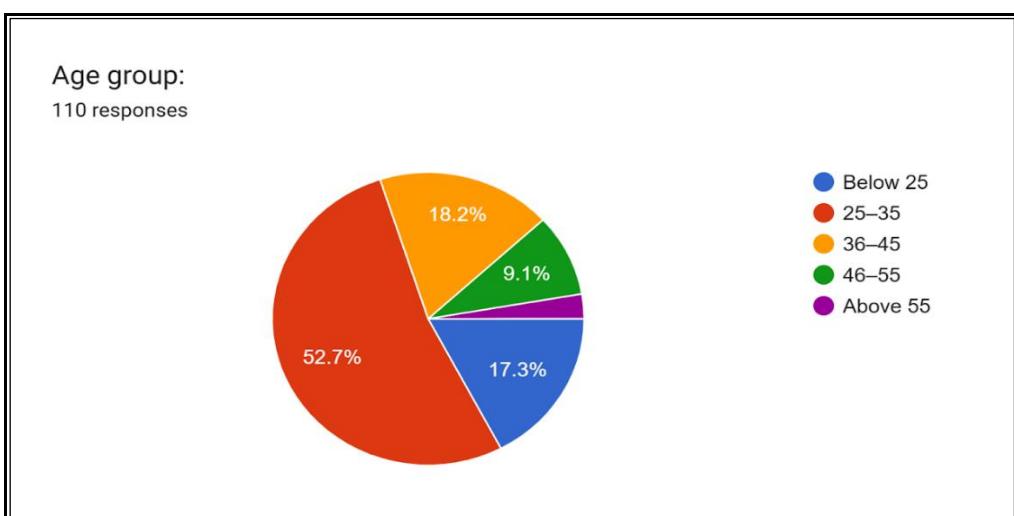
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helping to better understand the connection between women's economic participation and their overall well-being.

Data Analysis

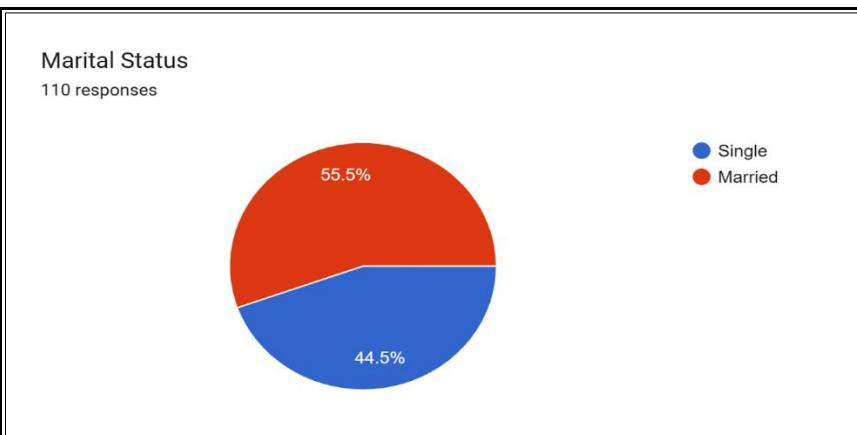
Traffic Light analysis of data

Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Age group	25–35 years	52.7%	Yellow	Majority of respondents are in the early/mid-career phase, where balancing professional and family responsibilities is most challenging.

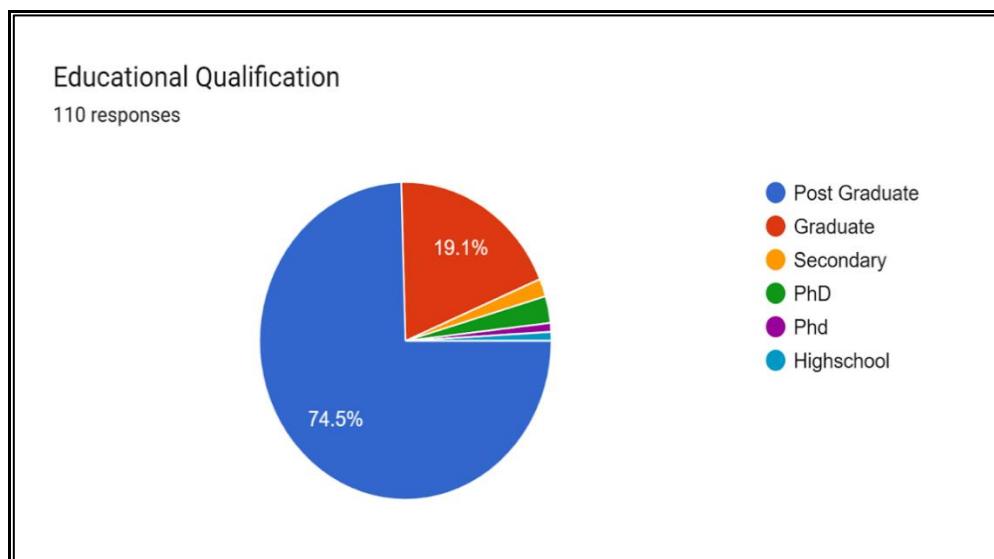


Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Marital Status	Married	55%	Yellow	Married women experience additional home-care duties, increasing time constraints.

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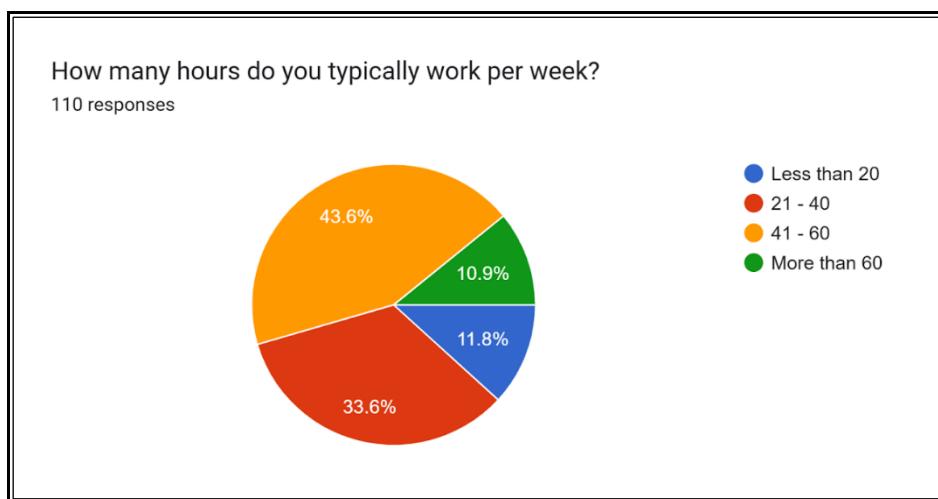


Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Educational Qualification	Postgraduate	74%	Green	High education level shows strong workforce participation and empowerment.



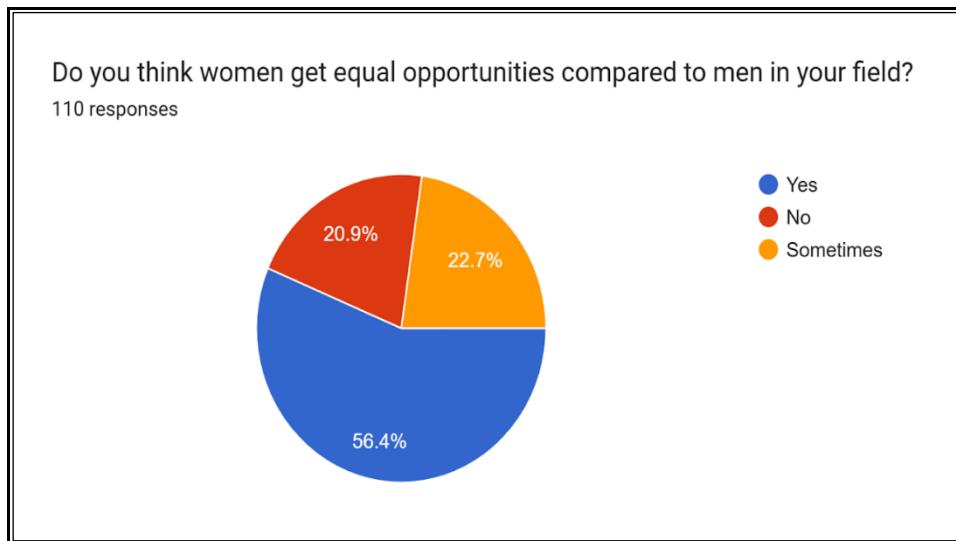
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Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Working Hours per Week	41–60 hours/ More than 60	52%	Red	Extended working hours lead to fatigue, stress, and imbalance in work-life.

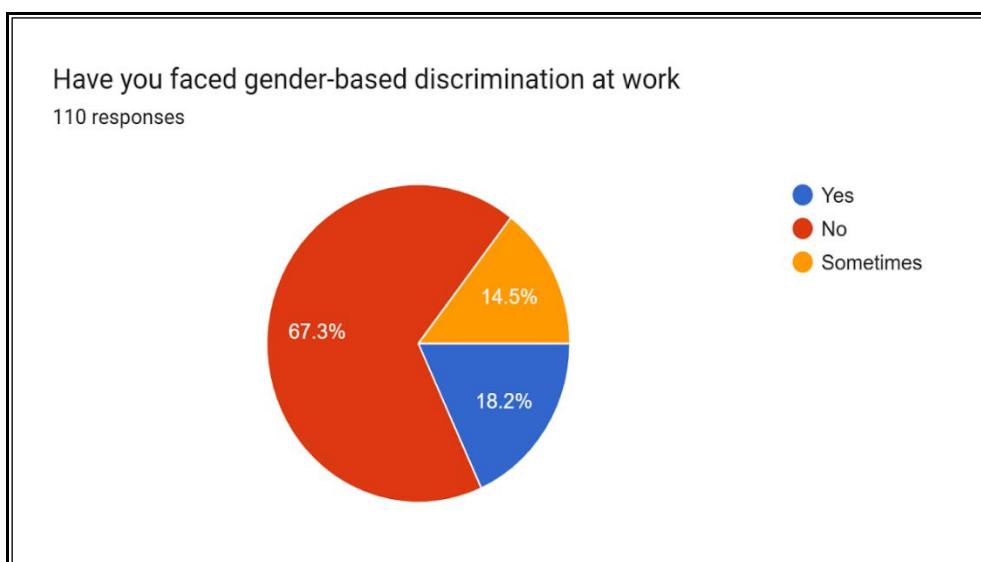


Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Equal Opportunities	Yes and no mixed	45%	Yellow	Partial gender equality achieved, though gaps remain in promotions and leadership roles.

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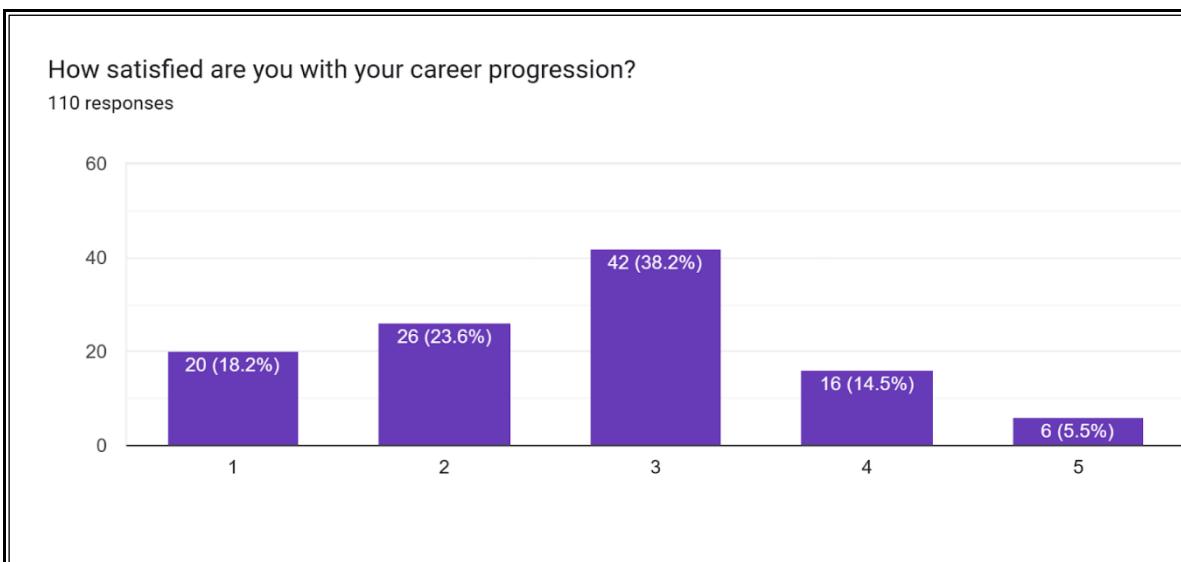


Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Faced Gender-Based Discrimination	No/Sometimes	48%	Red	Indicates persistent bias and unequal treatment in workplaces.



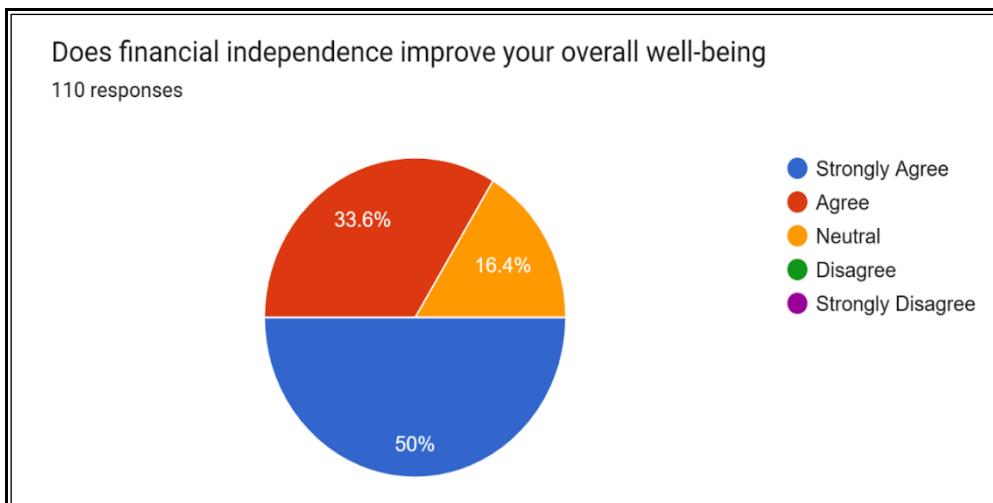
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Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Career Satisfaction	Moderately Satisfied (3-4)	60%	Yellow	Indicates stability but limited advancement or recognition opportunities.

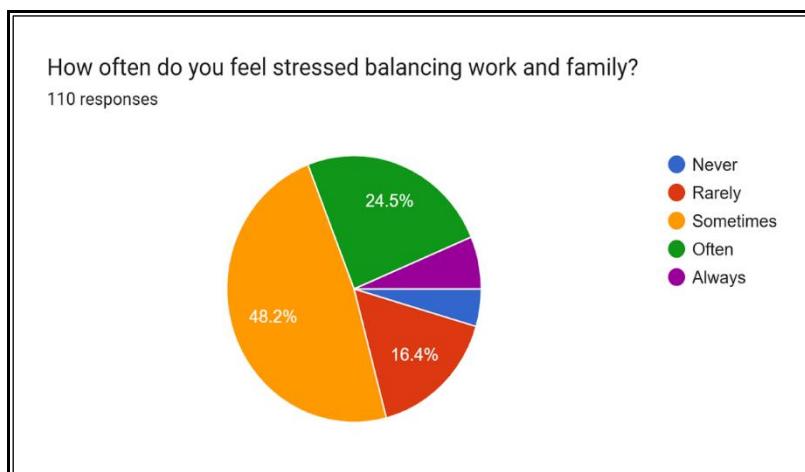


Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Financial Independence & Well-being	Strongly Agree/Agree	83%	Green	Shows financial autonomy enhances self-worth and overall well-being.

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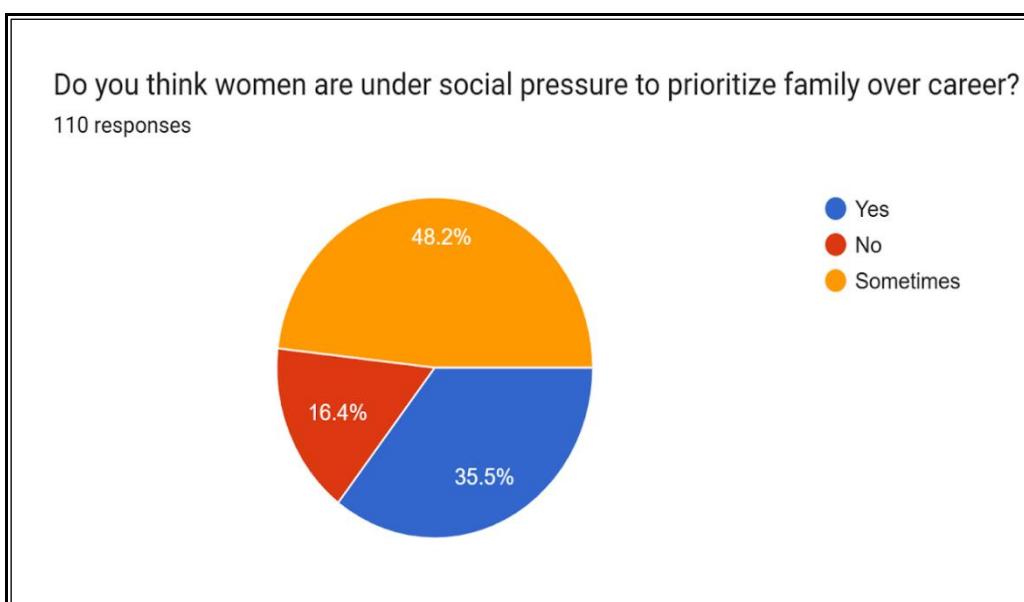


Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Work-Family Stress	Often/sometimes	72%	Red	High stress levels in maintaining a balance between work and family.



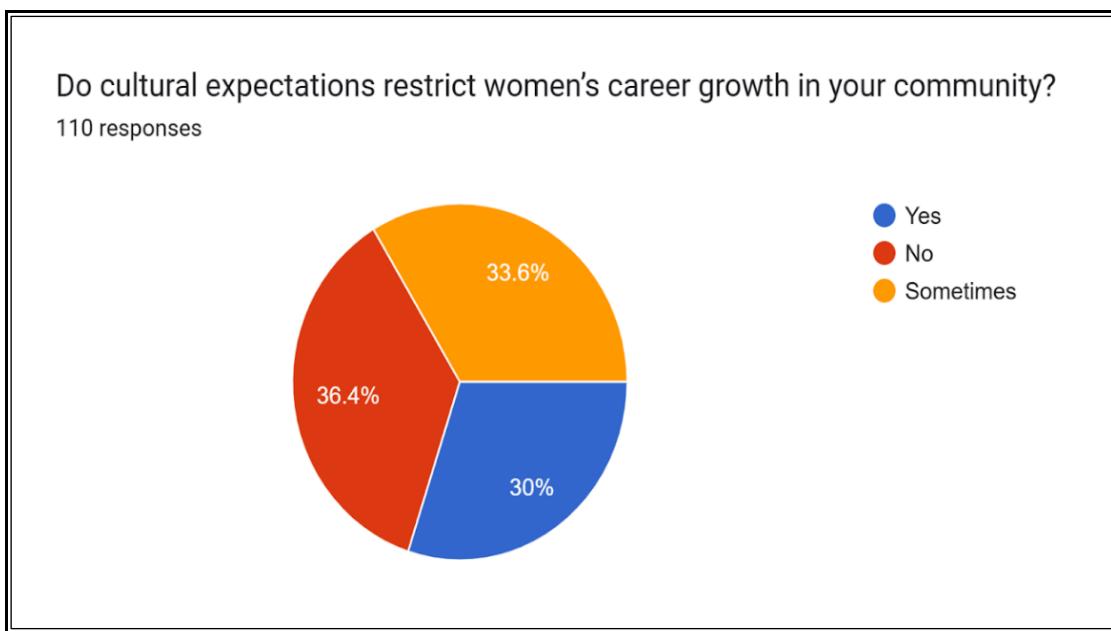
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Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Social Pressure to Prioritise Family	Yes/sometimes	83%	Red	Reflects deep-rooted cultural expectations for women to prioritise family.



Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Cultural Expectations Limit Career Growth	Yes/Sometimes	63%	Red	Cultural restrictions hinder women's career advancement in many cases.

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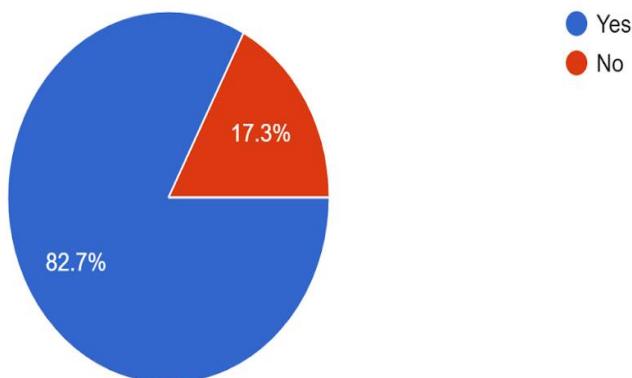


Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Childcare/ Elderly Care Management	With family help	46% (Open-ended question response aggregate)	Yellow	Relies heavily on informal support systems rather than institutional help.

Workplace Facilities (Maternity/Flexibility)	Yes	87%	Green	Shows growing organisational awareness for women-friendly policies.
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Does your workplace provide maternity leave, childcare facilities, or flexible work hours?

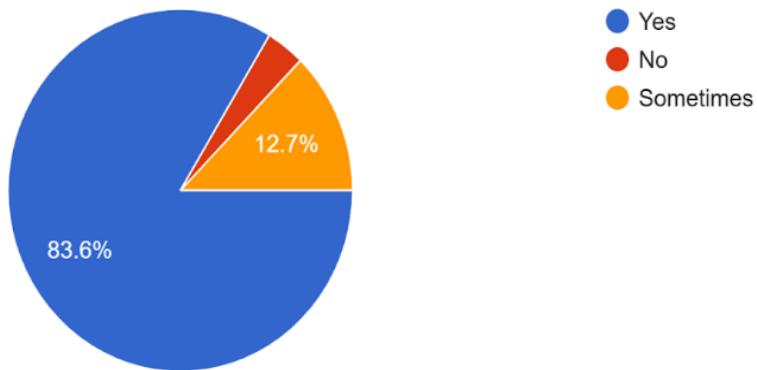
110 responses



Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Feeling Safe and Respected	Yes	83%	Green	Indicates workplaces in Mangalore are largely respectful and inclusive.

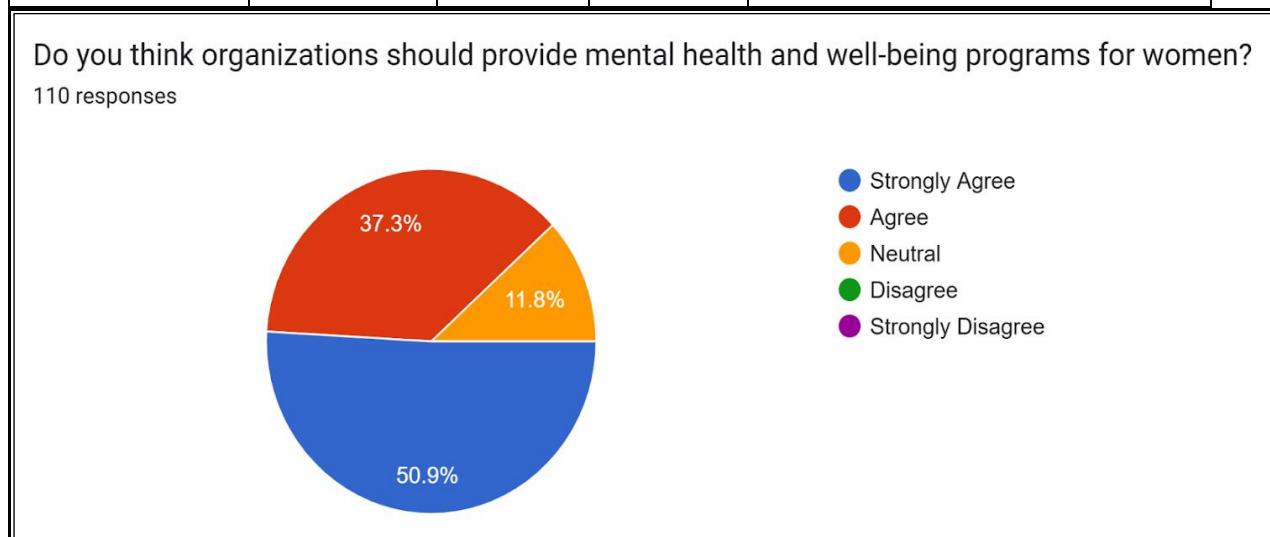
Do you feel safe and respected at your workplace?

110 responses



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Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Need for Mental Health Programs	Strongly Agree/ Agree	87%	Yellow	Awareness is high, but implementation of such programs is still limited.



Question	Majority Response	Percentage	Traffic Light Colour	Reason for Colour
Workplace Support Needed	Flexible Timings	60%(Open ended question aggregate)	Yellow	Suggests demand for better work-life management policies.
Biggest Challenges	Time Constraint / Double Burden	65%(Open ended question aggregate)	Red	Demonstrates persistent systemic issues balancing domestic and professional roles.
Expectations from Society	Shared Responsibilities	58%(Open ended question aggregate)	Yellow	Indicates growing advocacy for gender equality in home and work settings.
Definition of Well-being	Balance & Peace of Mind	70%(Open ended question response aggregate)	Green	Women perceive well-being as holistic — mental, emotional, and social balance.

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Summary of objective

Objective	Findings	Overall Color	Reason
1. Challenges in balancing professional and personal roles	Long work hours, social norms, and household responsibilities cause stress and imbalance.	Red	Indicates significant challenges requiring policy and societal change.
2. Impact of work-life balance on well-being	Emotional strain and fatigue are prevalent; economic independence provides resilience.	Yellow	Balanced perception, but emotional health needs more support.
3. Coping strategies and support systems	Dependence on family members, minimal institutional childcare, and limited flexible work options.	Yellow	Informal strategies dominate; structured systems are lacking.
4. Policy and practice recommendations	Encourage flexible schedules, mental health programs, and shared domestic responsibilities.	Green	Positive roadmap for women's holistic well-being.

Findings

Many respondents are in the **25–35 age group**, balancing early/mid-career demands with family responsibilities.

Long working hours (41–60 hours/week) and more than 60 hours cause high fatigue, stress, and poor work-life balance.

Gender discrimination remains a major issue, with nearly half experiencing bias “sometimes” or “often.”

Social and cultural pressures continue to influence women’s career growth, pushing them to prioritise family over profession.

Work-family stress is high, with many reporting difficulties managing domestic and professional duties.

Women largely depend on **family support** for childcare and eldercare, with limited institutional options available.

Despite challenges, **educational levels and financial independence** are strong—most respondents are postgraduates and economically self-reliant.

The work environment is generally safe and respectful, showing progress in gender-inclusive practices.

There is a **strong demand for flexible work timings** and better work-life management policies.

Mental health awareness is high, but actual implementation of support programs remains limited.

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Career satisfaction is moderate, indicating scope for better recognition and growth opportunities.

The definition of well-being emphasises emotional balance, peace of mind, and holistic development.

Overall, women's empowerment is growing, but **systemic, cultural, and workload barriers** continue to hinder true equality and well-being.

Suggestions

The study highlights the key challenges faced by working women, particularly in managing long work hours, dealing with gender discrimination, and achieving a work–family balance. To address these red zone issues, organisations should adopt flexible work schedules, enforce healthy work-hour limits, and conduct time management and stress-reduction workshops. Gender-sensitivity training, transparent promotions, and grievance redressal systems are essential to curb bias. Providing childcare support, hybrid work options, and awareness programs involving families can ease the pressure of balancing domestic and professional roles. Additionally, community campaigns and NGO collaborations can help challenge cultural norms that restrict women's career growth.

In the yellow and green zones, focus should shift to sustaining positive trends and enhancing growth opportunities. Mentorship programs, leadership development, and recognition initiatives can boost satisfaction and retention. Expanding mental health programs, financial literacy workshops, and entrepreneurship support will empower women further. Meanwhile, ensuring workplace safety, equal pay, and family-friendly policies will strengthen inclusion. Broader societal awareness through campaigns and education reforms can reinforce gender equality and shared responsibilities at home and work.

Conclusion

The study highlights that women continue to face significant challenges in achieving a sustainable balance between their professional, family, and social roles. While higher education levels and financial independence reflect growing empowerment, long working hours, persistent gender discrimination, and deep-rooted social expectations continue to strain women's physical and emotional well-being. The findings indicate that women in the 25–35 age group, particularly married respondents, experience the highest levels of work–family conflict, often leading to fatigue, stress, and limited career progression.

Despite positive developments such as safe workplaces, maternity benefits, and growing awareness about mental health, institutional support systems like childcare facilities, flexible work options, and counselling programs remain inadequate. Most women rely on informal coping strategies and family support to manage dual responsibilities.

The study concludes that improving work–life balance requires a combined effort from organisations, families, and society. Policies promoting flexible work arrangements, gender-sensitivity training, mental health initiatives, and shared domestic responsibilities are essential for creating an equitable and supportive environment. Strengthening these areas will not only enhance women's overall well-being but also foster greater participation, productivity, and satisfaction in the workforce.

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