

Digital, Domestic and Economic Empowerment: Women Leading India's Progress

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Abstract— This paper explores the multifaceted challenges faced by women in India in balancing professional and personal responsibilities. Despite socio-economic progress, women across different strata encounter persistent barriers, such as gender stereotypes, income inequality, insufficient workplace infrastructure, and technological limitations. These challenges are compounded by social expectations, emotional pressures, and health-related issues, impacting their mental, physical, and emotional well-being. Digital media also introduces new dynamics, such as peer pressure and cyberbullying, which further complicate work-life boundaries. Additionally, the role of women in shaping a Vikasit Bharat (Developed India) is highlighted through their potential contributions to entrepreneurship, governance, sustainability, and community development. A timeline from 2007 to 2047 traces the evolution of women's work-life balance, envisioning a future with shared responsibilities, inclusive workplaces, and reduced household burdens through automation and smart infrastructure.

The paper emphasizes that achieving a sustainable work-life balance is crucial for personal growth, mental well-being, and national development. It proposes remedial strategies at various levels—family, organizational, and governmental—focusing on equitable responsibility-sharing, flexible work policies, affordable childcare, and skill development programs. Solutions to enhance women's well-being include mindfulness practices, exercise, emotional support systems, and spirituality through activities like yoga and journaling. The study concludes that with supportive policies, societal shifts, and digital empowerment, women can overcome these challenges, playing a pivotal role in India's economic and social progress. Their leadership in key areas like business, education, and sustainability will not only foster inclusive growth but also create a sustainable future for the nation. This comprehensive exploration offers a framework for empowering women to balance work and life effectively, ensuring they become active contributors to India's journey towards becoming a developed nation by 2047.

Index Terms— Cyberbullying, Entrepreneurship, Gender stereotypes, Sustainability, Work-life balance

I. INTRODUCTION

Women across India, irrespective of socio-economic strata, grapple with balancing their professional and personal lives. They face a myriad of challenges due to gender roles, societal expectations, and lack of infrastructure, income disparity, and technological hurdles. While progress has been made over the last two decades, many barriers remain, especially concerning mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being. Achieving a better work-life balance is vital, not only for the personal development of women but also for the growth of the nation. This paper explores these challenges in detail and suggests strategies to promote women's empowerment, ensuring they become active contributors to Vikasit Bharat (Developed India).

Human Resource Management as a Catalyst for Women Empowerment

Effective **human resource management (HRM)** plays a pivotal role in enhancing women's employability and professional growth in India. Organizations that implement inclusive HR practices—such as mentorship programs, skill development workshops, and flexible work arrangements—have reported increased retention of female employees by up to 30% in sectors like IT and finance [1]. By promoting gender-sensitive policies and equitable opportunities, HRM ensures women can contribute meaningfully to entrepreneurship, governance, and sustainability initiatives.

Bridging Skill Gaps and Enhancing Employability

Women's employability is closely linked to targeted training and reskilling programs. Initiatives like the Government of India's Skill India Mission have trained over 10 million women in various vocational and digital skills since 2015, enhancing their participation in both organized and informal sectors [2]. Corporate programs that provide on-the-job learning, digital literacy, and leadership development further empower women to assume decision-making roles, thereby fostering inclusive economic growth.

Strategic Impact on National Development

Empowered women contribute to organizational efficiency and national productivity. Studies indicate that companies with higher female representation in leadership positions achieve 15% higher profitability and innovation outcomes [3]. By integrating HRM strategies with gender empowerment frameworks, India can harness the potential of women to realize the 2047 vision of a developed nation, creating sustainable and inclusive growth across all sectors.

Challenges Faced by Women in India

1. Social Challenges

- **Gender Stereotypes and Roles:**

Lower-income women juggle informal work with household chores, while middle and higher-income women bear dual responsibilities of professional careers and caregiving.

Example: A teacher balances children's education with school duties.

- **Family Expectations:** Traditional family setups expect women, especially in middle- and higher-income groups, to manage household activities and child care.
- **Social Stigma:** Working women often face criticism for prioritizing careers over family, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas.

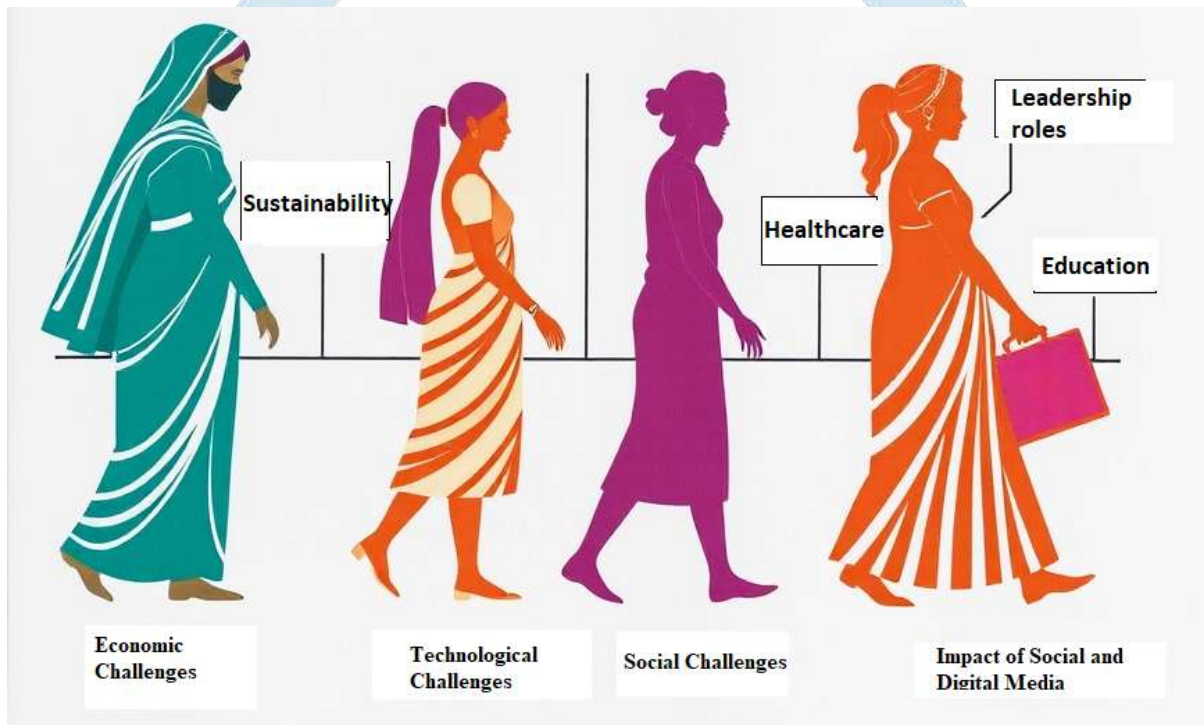


Figure: Challenges Faced by Women in India

2. Environmental Challenges

- **Workplace Infrastructure:** Lower-income women lack safe transportation and proper childcare facilities.
Example: A factory worker struggles to find safe day-care for her children.
- **Pollution and Commute Stress:** Urban women endure long, stressful commutes, affecting their physical and emotional well-being.

3. Economic Challenges

- **Income Inequality:** Wage disparity persists, with women in informal sectors earning significantly less than men.
Example: A bank employee works overtime to meet family expenses.
- **Financial Sacrifices:** Higher-income women often sacrifice career growth to meet family demands.

4. Technological Challenges

- **Digital Illiteracy:** Women from economically weaker backgrounds lack access to digital skills and online job platforms.
- **Work-from-Home Burnout:** Women working remotely struggle to maintain work-life boundaries.

5. Impact of Social and Digital Media

- **Comparison and Peer Pressure:** social media creates unrealistic expectations about maintaining perfect work and personal lives.
- **Cyberbullying and Harassment:** Women entrepreneurs and influencers face online abuse, affecting emotional well-being.

Management of Well-being

- **Physical Health:** Women face fatigue and neglect self-care due to excessive multitasking.
Solution: Promote exercise, regular check-ups, and use of fitness apps.
- **Mental Health:** Stress, burnout, and decision fatigue are common.
Solution: Practice mindfulness, and organizations should offer counselling services.
- **Emotional Well-being:** Emotional guilt over work-family conflict affects women.
Solution: Build supportive networks and encourage open family communication.
- **Spiritual Well-being:** Lack of time for reflection reduces personal growth.
Solution: Incorporate meditation, yoga, and journaling into daily routines.

Remedial Measures for Work-Life Balance

- **At the Family Level:**
Encourage equitable sharing of responsibilities and support women's professional goals.
- **At the Organizational Level:**
Provide flexible work hours, maternity leave, and childcare support.
- **At the Government Level:**
Implement gender-sensitive policies and ensure access to affordable childcare and skill development programs.
- **Role of Social and Digital Media:**
Promote positive role models and encourage women entrepreneurs to use digital platforms effectively.

Contribution of Women to Vikasit Bharat

- **Entrepreneurship:** Women can start small businesses to boost local economies.
- **Education and Skill Development:** Women mentors can promote financial literacy and vocational training.
- **Governance and Policy-Making:** Active participation in policymaking will ensure gender-inclusive growth.
- **Driving Sustainability:** Women can lead eco-friendly initiatives in communities and businesses.
- **Leadership Roles:** By assuming leadership positions, women will foster diversity and inclusivity.
- **Community Development:** Volunteerism and social projects in healthcare and education can empower local communities.

Evolution of Women's Work-Life Balance: 2007–2047

2007

- Traditional gender roles restricted women to household duties, especially in rural areas.
- Infrastructure for childcare and safe transportation was almost non-existent.

2027

- Social norms are evolving, but family expectations remain high.
- Dual-income families are becoming more common, though wage disparity persists.
- Remote work is prevalent but leads to burnout.

2047 (Projection)

- Shared parenting and housework will become the norm.
- Smart cities with eco-friendly infrastructure will enhance work-life balance.
- AI and automation will reduce household labour, freeing up time for careers.
- Women-led start-ups and leadership in sustainability will drive economic growth.

CONCLUSION

The challenges faced by women in balancing work and personal life are diverse, ranging from social norms to economic inequality and technological barriers. However, with supportive families, progressive workplace policies, and government interventions, women can overcome these challenges. By focusing on their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being, women will play a pivotal role in building a Vikasit Bharat. With growing participation in entrepreneurship, leadership, and community development, women will contribute significantly to sustainable development, shaping India's future as a developed nation.

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