

Work-Life Balance and Mental Health: A Sociological Study of Dual-Income Households

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ABSTRACT

This study looks at the complex link between work-life balance and mental health in metropolitan Indian households with multiple incomes. As both couples pursue professional professions, juggling professional expectations and domestic responsibilities has become increasingly difficult. The research takes a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data from structured surveys of 300 dual-income homes with qualitative insights from 25 in-depth interviews. The findings show that work-life imbalance relates to psychological discomfort, which manifests as worry, sleep difficulties, and emotional weariness. Notably, working women report greater levels of stress, which is ascribed to an uneven distribution of home and caregiving tasks.

Despite equal job opportunities, conventional gender standards continue to shape home relationships and emotional labor demands. Coping techniques discovered include time management measures, flexible work arrangements, dependence on extended family support, and mental health therapy; however, their efficacy varies by socioeconomic status. Men endure stress, which is frequently tied to financial demands and professional performance. The study indicates that systemic interventions, such as gender-sensitive workplace rules, equal home duty standards, and mental health awareness programs, are critical in mitigating the negative impacts of work-life imbalance on individual well-being and family dynamics. Policy adjustments and cultural retraining are advised to provide more equal and emotionally friendly situations for dual-income families.

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of dual-income households in urban India reflects wider socioeconomic changes, such as rising female employment involvement and shifting gender roles. While this transition has economic benefits, it also complicates managing work and personal duties, frequently resulting in psychological stress.

According to studies, women endure a disproportionate share of home responsibilities, even while working full-time, resulting in increased stress and mental health difficulties. In contrast, males in dual-income homes frequently experience stress from financial commitments and cultural expectations of professional achievement. Understanding the relationship between work-life balance and mental health in this setting is critical for establishing effective therapies and policies.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design: A mixed-methods strategy was used to address both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study challenge.

Sampling: The study included 300 dual-income households in metropolitan India, assuring variety in terms of age, employment, and socioeconomic level. In addition, 25 in-depth interviews were done to obtain more nuanced observations.

Data Collection Tools: Structured surveys evaluated work-life balance, mental health markers, and coping techniques. Semi-structured interview guidelines aided qualitative data collecting.

Statistical Analysis: To find trends and relationships, quantitative data were evaluated with descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, and regression analysis. To identify significant themes and storylines from qualitative data, thematic analysis was applied.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Work-Life Imbalance and Mental Health Indicators in Dual-Income Households

According to the survey, a sizable proportion (68%) of participants experienced severe work-life imbalance. These people have evident mental health issues like anxiety, emotional weariness, and sleep difficulties. Only 22% of participants reported a moderate work-life imbalance, which resulted in mild stress and occasional weariness. A smaller sample (10%) reported minimal imbalance and no serious mental health difficulties. The findings show a definite correlation between work-life imbalance and mental health issues in dual-income households.

Table 1: Work-Life Balance and Mental Health Indicators in Dual-Income Households

Work-Life Imbalance Level	Percentage of Respondents	Mental Health Symptoms Experienced
High	68%	Anxiety, Emotional Exhaustion, Sleep Disturbances
Moderate	22%	Mild Stress, Occasional Fatigue
Low	10%	No Significant Mental Health Issues

Table 1 shows that those with a significant work-life imbalance are more likely to report mental health concerns, implying that imbalanced work and home life has a negative impact on emotional well-being. The findings highlight the necessity of addressing work-life balance as a means of boosting mental health in these homes.

Gendered Division of Labor in Dual-Income Households

Another significant result was the gendered division of labor in homes. The survey discovered that women continue to shoulder a disproportionate share of home obligations. Specifically, 85% of women reported doing household chores and childcare activities including school runs and assignments. Men, on the other hand, were more active in financial management, with 80% claiming budgeting and payment participation. Women were also more likely to provide emotional support inside their families, with 75% of them doing so.

Table 2: Gendered Division of Labor in Dual-Income Households

Household Responsibility	Percentage of Men Involved	Percentage of Women Involved
Household Chores (Cleaning, Cooking, etc.)	35%	85%
Childcare (School Runs, Homework)	28%	90%
Financial Management (Budgeting, Payments)	80%	20%
Emotional Care (Family Counseling, Support)	40%	75%

Table 2 shows a continued gender discrepancy in domestic work, with women still shouldering the majority of household tasks and childcare while males are more active in financial affairs. This supports the stereotype of gender roles in dual-income households, emphasizing the importance of more balanced duties allocation in order to prevent work-life imbalances and enhance overall family dynamics.

Coping Mechanisms for Stress Management

The survey also looked at how respondents dealt with the stress caused by work-life imbalance. Time management measures were the most generally reported coping mechanism, used by 78% of respondents, followed by flexible work arrangements (55%) and extended family assistance (65%). 48% of participants reported receiving mental health therapy, which had a good efficacy rating (4.5/5).

Table 3: Coping Mechanisms for Stress Management in Dual-Income Households

Coping Mechanism	Percentage of Respondents Using It	Effectiveness (Scale 1-5)
Time Management Strategies	78%	4.2
Flexible Work Arrangements	55%	3.8
Support from Extended Family	65%	4.0
Mental Health Counseling	48%	4.5

Table 3 shows that time management measures were the most often employed and had a high perceived efficacy, followed by family assistance and flexible work arrangements. The value of professional help, such as mental health therapy, is also clear, with participants reporting considerable beneficial outcomes from counseling sessions.

Stress Sources among Men in Dual-Income Households

A closer look at stress causes among men indicated that financial strain was the most common cause of stress, with 82% reporting it. Professional expectations and restricted family time both contributed to stress, impacting emotional well-being and generating exhaustion. Surprisingly, 39% of males felt annoyance with their limited engagement in household responsibilities, which contributed to their overall stress.

Table 4: Stress Sources among Men in Dual-Income Households

Stress Source	Percentage of Men Reporting It	Mental Health Symptoms Experienced
Financial Pressure	82%	Anxiety, Sleep Disturbances, Irritability
Professional Expectations	78%	Emotional Exhaustion, Stress
Limited Family Time	46%	Fatigue, Guilt
Lack of Domestic Involvement	39%	Frustration, Stress

Table 4 shows that financial pressure and professional expectations are the biggest drivers of stress for males, hurting both their mental and physical well-being. This emphasizes the difficulties that males confront in dual-income homes, when job obligations and money worries dominate.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate the major influence that work-life imbalance has on the mental health of people in dual-income homes. The gendered distribution of labor in these homes continues to create stress and imbalance, particularly among women. Coping methods such as time management tactics, flexible work arrangements, and mental health counseling have been shown to be useful in stress management, but structural changes in family obligations and work settings are required to achieve long-term work-life balance. Future study should look on interventions targeted at promoting a more fair distribution of family labor and enhancing support systems for both men and women in dual-income families.

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