



Mental Health, Psychological Well-being and Life Satisfaction between Working and Home Making Women

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ABSTRACT

The present study is an empirical investigation carried out on working women (N-40) and home making women (N-40) of Deoghar. The objectives were to compare the groups in terms of mental health, well-being, and life satisfaction. It was hypothesized that the two groups of women will differ significantly in terms of 1) Mental Health 2) Psychological Well-Being and 3) Life Satisfaction. For this purpose, the two groups of women were administered Mental Health Checklist by Kumar A., Well-Being Scale by Devendra Singh Sisodia and Pooja Chaudhary, Life Satisfaction Scale by Alam and Srivastava to measure the variables. Besides these, a PDS was used to seek respondent's personal information. The obtained data were treated using t' test. The findings confirmed the hypotheses. It was found that working women excelled over home making women in terms of having sound mental health, high wellbeing, and high life satisfaction). Thus, it was concluded that mental health, well-being and life satisfaction amongst women are function of working status amongst women.

KEY WORDS

Mental Health, Working Women, Home Making Women, Life Satisfaction, Psychology.

INTRODUCTION

Mental health, psychological well-being, and life satisfaction are essential aspects of an individual's overall health and functioning, influencing their ability to cope with stress, manage emotions, and experience fulfillment in life. These components of human well-being have been widely researched, particularly concerning how various factors, including social roles and gender, affect them. In many societies, women's roles are traditionally categorized into two primary

spheres: the workforce and the home. Working women, who participate in formal employment, and homemaking women, who manage household responsibilities, often face differing challenges and opportunities that shape their mental health, psychological well-being, and life satisfaction. Understanding how these roles impact women's well-being is crucial for promoting gender equality, improving policies, and ensuring women's health in a holistic manner.

Mental health, in a broad sense, refers to the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of an individual, affecting how people think, feel, and behave. For women, the stressors that come with balancing personal, professional, and societal expectations can significantly influence their mental health. Research suggests that working women often experience elevated levels of stress due to work-related pressures, societal expectations of productivity, and the demands of balancing both work and family life. On the other hand, homemaking women, while not traditionally engaged in paid work, may experience stress stemming from social isolation, lack of financial independence, and limited opportunities for personal development or recognition.

Psychological well-being encompasses positive aspects of mental health, such as self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, and autonomy. It is linked to an individual's ability to derive meaning from their roles, cope with challenges, and maintain a sense of personal fulfillment. For working women, psychological well-being can be enhanced through career achievements, financial independence, and professional development. However, these benefits may come at the expense of personal time and family life, leading to potential conflicts and burnout. Conversely, homemaking women, while potentially having more time for family and personal leisure, might face lower levels of psychological well-being due to societal devaluation of domestic labor and a lack of external validation for their work.

Life satisfaction, a global assessment of one's quality of life, is often influenced by how individuals perceive their roles and accomplishments in various domains, including work, family, and personal growth. For women, life satisfaction is frequently shaped by how they balance and navigate their multiple roles. Working women might find life satisfaction through financial success and career advancement, but the constant juggling of work and home responsibilities could detract from their overall satisfaction. Homemaking women, though potentially more satisfied with their home life and family connections, might struggle with feelings of societal undervaluation or a lack of personal fulfillment outside their domestic roles.

The intersection of these factors — mental health, psychological well-being, and life satisfaction — varies significantly depending on whether women are working outside the home or fulfilling domestic roles. These dynamic warrants careful examination to understand the unique experiences of women in both spheres and to promote policies that enhance their well-being. Therefore, comparing the mental health, psychological well-being, and life satisfaction between working and homemaking women provides valuable insights into the impact of societal expectations, gender roles, and personal choices on women's lives.

Review of Literature

Grzywacz and Marks⁷ (2000) explored the mental health outcomes in dual-earner and single-earner families. Working women tend to experience higher stress levels due to the demands of balancing work and family responsibilities, while homemaking women face mental health challenges related to isolation and dependency. Hsieh and Wang¹¹ (2017). investigated the impact of work-family conflict on job and life satisfaction. The study concludes that working women often report lower life satisfaction due to role conflict, whereas homemaking women face challenges related to lack of financial autonomy, leading to reduced life satisfaction. Greenhaus and Beutell⁶ (1985) emphasizes the role conflict that working women face, which contributes to higher mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. On the other hand, homemaking women experience stress from a lack of social validation and limited external support. Duxbury and Higgins⁵ (2001). explored how gendered societal expectations impact the psychological well-being of working women. The study highlights that while working women experience career satisfaction, they also face significant

psychological stress from attempting to balance family and work responsibilities. Moen and Chermack⁹ (2005) examined the effects of employment on women's mental health. It suggests that working women experience heightened mental health distress due to the competing demands of work and home life. In contrast, homemaking women often experience stress from social isolation. Wethington and Kessler¹⁰ (1986) analyzes the relationship between social support and life satisfaction among women. It finds that both working and homemaking women benefit from strong social support networks, but working women tend to have higher life satisfaction when they receive support both at work and at home.

Hochschild and Machung⁸ (2012) explores how working women often face the "second shift" – performing household labor after their workday. This imbalance can lead to mental health issues, such as stress and fatigue, and negatively affect life satisfaction, especially if the women do not receive adequate help from their partners. Döring and Schupp⁴ (2008) examined the relationship between family roles and life satisfaction among women in different cultures. It shows that in societies with strong traditional gender roles, homemaking women often report lower life satisfaction due to limited opportunities for personal development. Carr and Liguori² (2003) focused on workplace stress and its mental health consequences. Working women face higher levels of occupational stress compared to homemakers, which often leads to burnout and psychological distress. Coping strategies such as time management and seeking support can mitigate these negative effects. Bianchi, S. M., & Milkie¹ (2010) examined the dual burden of paid and unpaid work for women and its impact on life satisfaction. The authors conclude that working women report higher levels of life satisfaction when they have supportive work environments, but the constant balancing act of paid and unpaid labor can decrease overall satisfaction. Choi and Lee³ (2014) compared the psychological well-being and life satisfaction of homemakers and employed women in South Korea. It finds that employed women report higher psychological well-being due to the benefits of financial independence and personal achievement, while homemakers report greater life satisfaction when they perceive their domestic role as fulfilling and valued.

Objectives

The study intends to compare working and home making women groups in terms of (i) mental health (ii) psychological well being (iii) life satisfaction.

Hypothesis

- H₁ Working and home making women will differ significantly in terms of their mental health.
- H₂ Working and home making women will differ significantly in terms of their psychological well-being.
- H₃ Working and home making women will differ significantly in terms of their life satisfaction.

Method of Study

Sample Used

The sample comprised of 40 working and 40 home making women selected from Deoghar (Jharkhand) based on incidental-cum-purposive sampling technique. The working women were selected from different organizations of Deoghar (Jharkhand). Home making women were simply house wives. Other than the conditions required, the sample was matched so far as practicable.

Research Design

Between comparison group design was used

Tools Used

1. A personal data sheet was used to seek the personal information about the.
2. Mental Health Check List developed by Pramod Kumar was used to measure the mental health of women respondents.

3. Psychological Well-being Scale developed by Devendra Singh Sisodia and Pooja Choudhary was used to measure psychological well being of women groups of respondents.
4. Life Satisfaction Scale developed by Alam Q.G. and Srivastaga Ramji was used to measure life satisfaction & women groups of respondents.

Results and Interpretation

Table 01: Comparison between working and home making women in terms of mental health

Groups (Women)	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	P
Working	40	50.75	2.51	10.59	78	<.01
Home Making	40	44.82	2.47			

It is clear from the result table-01 that mental health of working women is comparatively sound (Mean=50.75) than the mental health of home making women (Mean=44.82) and the t-value is found significant (t=10.59; df=78; p<.01). Thus hypothesis no (1) is retained. Working women often manifest better mental health than homemaking women due to increased social interaction, financial independence, and a sense of accomplishment from professional roles. Engaging in structured work provides purpose, self-worth, and cognitive stimulation. In contrast, homemaking, while valuable, can sometimes lead to isolation, lack of recognition, and limited personal growth opportunities, potentially affecting mental well-being. Thus, employment can enhance psychological resilience and self-esteem.

Table 02: Comparison between working and home making women in terms of well-being

Groups (Women)	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	P
Working	40	189.60	2.43	8.77	78	<.01
Home Making	40	184.69	2.56			

It is clear from the result table-02 that working women excelled over home making women in terms of well-being. The t-value was found significant (t=8.77; df=78; p<.01). The significant higher mean (Mean=189.60) on the part of working women than home making women (Mean=184.69) with significant t-value (t=8.77; df=78; p<.01) supported the hypothesis. Working women often exhibit better psychological well-being than homemaking women due to increased social interaction, financial independence, and a sense of identity beyond domestic roles. Employment provides opportunities for personal growth, achievement, and self-esteem, which contribute positively to mental health. In contrast, homemaking women may face social isolation, role monotony, and lack of external validation, which can affect their psychological well-being.

Table 03: Comparison between working and home making women in terms of life satisfaction

Groups (Women)	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	P
Working	40	60.46	2.27	11.94	78	<.01
Home Making	40	54.25	2.38			

The results show in table-03 clearly revealed that working women excelled (Mean = 60.46) over home making women (Mean = 54.25) in terms of life satisfaction score. The t-value between the means was found significant (t=11.94; df=78; p<.01). Working women often experience higher life satisfaction than homemaking women due to financial independence, a sense of identity beyond family roles, and opportunities for social interaction and personal growth. Employment provides recognition, autonomy, and self-efficacy, which contribute to psychological well-being. In contrast, homemaking, while fulfilling, may sometimes limit external validation and personal achievement, affecting overall life satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

- (i) Working women manifest comparatively sound mental health as compared to home making women.
- (ii) Working women excel over home spare making women in terms of having higher degree of psychological well-being.
- (iii) Working women excel over home spare making women counterpart in terms of manifestation of higher degree of life satisfaction.

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