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Mental health linked with work life balance of working women

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Abstract---Employee mental health is the study dealing with mind and behaviour of a job holder, and how the individual sense of dealing with life and work affects their responses and reactions to the situations put forth on a daily basis. The study aims to classify employee behaviour in a predictable pattern so that the framework can come in handy to identify the behaviour of an individual employee. This research scrutinizes the circadian cycle of psychology of a working woman, effectuated by the daily work and life routine. The article also mentions the explanations and reasons, both observatory and psychological, of how and why a working woman is affected both externally and internally due to work-life balance. This study contributes towards placing emphasis on the behavioural patterns of a working woman, how to deal with the work-life balance struggles and how to influence/reinforce satisfaction in themselves and fellow comrades.

Keywords---mental health, working women, psychology, work-life balance.

Introduction

Work-life balance brings a lot of behavioural changes in an individual. There are many factors, especially in a woman's life, that negatively influence behaviour and coping with the multiple responsibilities both at office and home eventually lead to stress and anxiety. This article aims to provide with literature reviews based on Work-life balance and employee mental health. Women being a major part of working citizens is a reality today. However, despite a positive change in terms of

better work and family support, the gender roles, dual responsibilities and challenges thereof still weigh heavily on them. Their roles to be performed in work and home domains are both crucial and their mental state greatly impacts their performance. An employee's behaviour depends on how well he/she can perceive the work-life balance and approaching challenges. The hypothesis research models and regression analysis based on data collected from various surveys and articles has proved how mental wellbeing and work-life balance are interconnected. Though the impact of work-life interface applies to each individual, it is observed that women tend to face more challenges and conflicts raised by society and other factors like working hours, dual earners, single mother and so on. The field of social psychology holds one of the key factors to dealing with daily challenges faced as a female employee; how to influence co-workers being a part of society and how to fortify mental state as an individual making an impact on the society. The research opens up many new broadened areas of studies related to work-life balance. The articles revolve around the fields of individual psychology, sociology, variables that effectuate both stated interfaces and organisational strategies. The intention remains to provide with analysis the causes of stress among working citizens and to come up with methods that reinforce employee job satisfaction and mental wellbeing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This research summed up by **Sajid Haider, Shaista Jabeen and Jamil Ahmad**, is focused on answering why and how work-life balance alters an employee's performance in their work and how psychological welfare can reinforce satisfaction between oneself, presentation and co-workers. It is based on two hypothesis, under the Theory of Hypothesis- mediation hypothesis and moderate mediation hypothesis. According to a law of mediation analysis given by Baron & Kenny, three auxiliary sub-hypothesis incorporate the mediation hypothesis. First- the relation between an employee's work-life balance and job performance. Second- the relation between work-life balance and psychological welfare. Third- relation between psychological welfare and job performance. Mediation test involved a distinct regression equation in each of the three steps performed, based on Barron & Kenny, Muller, Judd and Yzerbyt. After solving multiple linear regression evaluation, the results indicated that this pattern of moderated mediation does exist in their model. It also shows, 'how reinforcing the result of work-life balance on psychological well-being leads to employee satisfaction with co-workers that, in turn, escalates the job performance', which is the theory of second hypothesis. The moderate mediation test, after performing multiple linear regression analysis in the order of three steps, proved the theory. An enriched and satisfied relation between an employee and their co-workers boost their subjective wellbeing, which in a loop, improves the job performance furthermore. The cognitive wellbeing helps improve the balance between the work and life, enhancing both required actions for the subjective and environmental demands. However, it is found that psychological well-being does not necessarily strengthen its sequel on job performance. But this statement mentioned in the referred source can be transformed by adding the fact that subjective sense of responsibility and improvising skills regarding their work, which in turn, ascends the mental state and works as a motivational factor to do even better in future.

Psychological well-being works as mediation to meet the demands of life from both, job and home. Women, who have so many challenges to face should also take reference above mentioned articles. The resource opens up to a lot of further analysis and observatory fact that it depends on how an employee deals with the daily challenges and the mental state of one-self is the effect of the actions in their environment, which in turn depends on subjective perception. Theory and evidence may support the article, but it does not confirm the statement of the truth, because it largely depends on the conditions one lives in which are both internal and external, conditions one grew up in, the way one perceives the happenings, whether they're willing to do what they do or not, their gender, and so on. Overall data proved the need of knowledge on the theory of hypothesis. And both the theories have one major common point that is to be taken note of- Cognition is the core catalyst.

[1] **Nancy P. Rothbard and Tracy L. Dumas** conducted an experimental research on managing the work-home interface and drew out the following information. The work-home interface, as known through many observations and polls, is very difficult to regulate in an employee's life and this is among the central topic of studies. In cases where both the partners are working and contribute to financial income, the struggle to strike a balance between work and home becomes intense. This study chiefly focuses on the psychological perspectives of employees and how it can be improved. Multiple roles are expected and are necessary to play, especially for women who are also working citizens. Organisational scholars have focused on analysing the employees' perception towards their work-home interface, the way they enact and the kind of relationship they have in both the necessarily living elements. The theoretical basis are provided by the disciplines of individual psychology and sociology in order to scrutinize the characteristics of roles demanded between work-life and home-life. Studies of human behaviour have also proved that stress, conflict, difficulty in maintaining relations are outcomes of the compact roles to be played in both the discussing interfaces. Through the 1980s and 1990s, research and analysis on roles to be played by an individual as family and as an employee has developed substantially. The dominant models in work-family research, performed by Edwards and Rothbard (2000), have provided us with six linkage mechanisms characterising the interrelatedness between roles to be played during the working time and the ones to be played during non-working time. The six models stated in the resource are as follows: spill over, compensation, segmentation, resource drain, congruence and work-family conflict. When there is a significant positive relation between measures of work and non-work experience, the spill over model comes to force. This model is mainly focused on spill over of moods since it is the subjective perception and behaviour that causes further happenings. Compensation is the second term referring to the case where one struggles to make up for the lack of involvement in one role caused by greater inclusion in terms of performing the other role. In this case, an individual causes dissatisfaction on one end and entails problems in relations and the relationship between both the roles. Segmentation is model viewing the natural segregation of the two roles of work and home in a way that they don't influence on another; given by Blood and Wolfe (1960) and Dubin (1973). However, it is a fact that work and home are closely related domains since it's one mind that fulfils both the roles; and segmentation has been viewed as an active psychological process

whereby many people may choose to maintain a boundary between work and home. Work-family conflict and stress means the psychological consequences of actively focusing on both the roles to be played as a worker and a non-worker. This condition is examined through the effect of coping with simultaneous work and home demands by analysing the conditions under one lives in- dual-income families, parents, individual and so on. This research has opened up to the new ground of human psychology regarding individual decision making. The same model of spill over works as half of the definition of congruence, when there is a significant positive relation between work-home interface, only that it is caused by external third factor that affects both the roles demanded to be played.

The work home interface affected by gender differences has also been stated in this document. Gender role leads to different psychological experiences and have different hardships. Both have different perceptions of their work, especially in women's cases. Their perception is moulded by the barriers of society, roles and expectations. Sociology studies state that women are expected to focus more on their homemaker role which affects their mental processes. Furthermore, besides men and women, there are LGBT+ gender group too who find it even more difficult to even be accepted in the society. Though, present times have witnessed a progression to more acceptability of these groups, much more may be needed for visible change. Nevertheless, the study exhibits that individual perception and sociology are interconnected and affect the employee. It also analyses conflicts and human behaviour with regard to work-life balance and contributes towards managing the interfaces so that everything is balanced including the psychological well-being.

[2] **Matthew J. Grawitch, Patrick W. Maloney, Stephanie E. Mooshegian, Larrisa K. Barber** made an overall assessment on global level of how an employee manages the time and energy in both the domains of work and home. This is the main basis of examining the nomological network of satisfaction regarding work-life balance. Balance is the unique ingredient of work-life domain perception and was also used to perform the structural equation modelling based on analysis of 456 employees. The relationship between conflicts and satisfaction highly depends on how well the individual can balance the work and non-work domains. The results after study showed that satisfaction with balance is negatively relating with work-to-life and life-to-work conflict, positively with bidirectional facilitation and work & non-work life satisfaction. Though, it is not mentioned particularly, but women employees do have it rougher than males since their roles have high expectations and women are more emotional. Conservation of resources theory by Hobfoll (1989), as mention in the article, shows that the way an employee perceives the effectiveness of subjective resource allocation influences the satisfaction with balance between work and non-work domains. This proved that absence of conflict and presence of facilitation isn't what mainly affects the satisfaction with work-life balance. The subjective satisfaction and the environmental satisfaction from both the stated domains keeps the individual healthy and increases performances. The bidirectional conflict and facilitation relationship with cross-domain negotiated the satisfaction with work-life balance whereas, the vice versa only partially mediated. If we consider the practice implications, the domain aligned outcomes have greater impact caused by the positive and negative experiences in a particular interface than cross-domain

outcomes. Therefore, concentrating or putting in more effort non-work life domain than work-life domain to reduce the conflicts between balance would be more effective. This shows that future studies need to focus more on the roles to be played as a family member in non-work domain because employees usually are more stressed about their homes. A healthy relation at home can make them feel better and motivate them to deal with job stress. The other way only makes it worse for them to satisfy their roles in both the domains, again leading to stress and conflicts. The satisfaction with balance doesn't completely mediate the relationship between work-to-life and life-to-work and the domain-align outcomes reveal that an individual's perception cannot completely be deducible by how well they balance their work-life interface. Grzywacz and Carlson (2007), assessed through employees reports how others' expectations are important and how not being able to catch up with them affects the relations. Apart from subjective perception, the challenges and changes that occur in outer surroundings sometimes also affect the result, which in turn deflects the perception. Therefore, the organizational study bodies should consider the direct, indirect, subjective and environmental effects on the work-life balance in both conflicts and facilitation in addition to an individual's perception. According to psychological studies of human behaviour, people tend to cling easily towards the negative and the surroundings/happenings affect their mind easily, which in turn influences their behaviour in both work and non-work domains and leads to dissatisfaction and subjective conflicts. As far as the observation goes, it's all about staying mentally strong. Tips to balance the interfaces are to be taken note of such as spending time with family members, watching a movie, talking to loved ones, going out for a walk and/or a ride and quoting positive thoughts each morning boosts the mood and helps to deal better with work load. Taking care of oneself is how one can best take care of the environment too.

[3] **Mahmoud Abubaker and Christopher Bagley** conducted a systematic literature review about qualitative and quantitative research on work-life balance. Techniques that rose in industrial and organisational psychology were complemented by sociological and ethnographic methodologies. Work life balance was defined as "A comfortable state of equilibrium achieved between an employee's primary priorities of their employment position and their private lifestyle". The definition especially applies to women since their mental health is manipulated vastly by what goes on in their house more than work-load or job stress. The issue with work-life balance was addressed as larger proportion of women prefer to be a working citizen and higher expectations are from them. Critical realism organizational issue was discussed along with the case studies of telecommunication organisations' on working women. Four salient types of WLB were stated. Hayman and Rasmussen methodologies were recommended to study this case further. On the whole it was observed that women have it more difficult to deal with their work-life interface and hence reporting on them taking in reference the affecting elements should help improve data. The study of individual psychology in regards with behaviour and environment should help in further analysis and development of mental healing methods.

[4] **Shalini Sathya Prasad and Prof. Sreenivas M** showed work-life balance as an issue, observed through both organisational and individual level through the reports of teachers (90 male and 90 female). Their review was then followed by

articulating directional hypothesis and independent sample 't' tests to analyse the obtained results. The quotient exhibited that both the groups have significant difference between them and the teachers with high balance of work-life interface showed a good psychological wellbeing as compared to teachers with low work-life balance. The study concluded that work-life balance index has a great effect on psychological wellbeing of college teachers. The change with technology in current situations is affecting the teachers more than before and hence it is advised to practice yoga, meditation, healthy diet and so on. To minimise the impact of low esteem, further analysis to draw out work-life balance strategies is suggested at the institutions. This widens the field of research based on the art of balancing. WLB and psychological wellbeing are interconnected and play a vital role in managing ones' circumstances better.

[5] **R. Balaji** reviewed the role of women and career development in India. The study showed that women with children were less committed to their job as compared to women without children. It was revealed that work related stress is more than family related and the relation between non-work domain, stress and psychological wellbeing was notable. It is stated that stress caused by work roles can interfere with non-work roles which can lead to family conflicts and effect the work performance poorly in turn. Work-family conflict is affected by work load, stress and strain. The pros and cons of work-family conflict were also stated. It is critical to fully understand the causes of conflict among work and non-work roles in, especially a married women's life; family management, child management, job management, house management, time management and so on are challenges faced on a daily basis. In order to delve further and extract methods to cope with work-life interface, the studies of work-family roles should include analysis of different perspectives too.

[6] **Sakhtivel Rani Kamalanabhan & Selvarani** aimed to analyse the relation between work/life balance and employee satisfaction. They conducted an exploratory research based on 210 employees of IT organisations on two different fields of 'work-life balance' and 'employee satisfaction'. It was found that work-life balance plays a core role that affects job performance and employee's satisfaction. The multiple regression method based on the survey concluded that employee job satisfaction leads to a healthy attitude towards performances, future career, benefits, work-life balance and so on. The study should focus more on women, especially mothers, as their emotional state is easily mouldable and they have it harder in few areas even though the era has changed. The rewards and appreciation model reflects the employee job satisfaction index which acts as a good motive to balance both work and non-work domain; it also is seen to reduce stress caused by work-load. Turning mistakes into learning opportunities enhances their enthusiasm. A positive work-life balance is the key that mediates through all the other variables, leading to job-satisfaction.

[7] **Geraldine Grady and Alma M. McCarthy** performed qualitative interviews on 18 working mothers between the age of 37 and 55 with child/children below 18 years and aimed on the perception of mid-career mothers towards their work and household roles. It's stated that these women competed with priorities of work, family and often left out themselves to shape the complex relation of work

and home interfaces. The study built on the kaleidoscope career model theory, provided observations on work-life balance. It was seen that motherhood made them selfless, and their children were their top priority while career was also considered a high importance. In mid-career stage, the participants were found to seek self-care time too in order to find new meaning in work-life complex. This article gives rise to a whole new line individual psychology of professional working mothers and a whole new sub-part of work-life balance. For mothers there are high expectations from their roles and sometimes due to overload conflicts occur. The family should support a working mother and make sure she is taking care of herself; since her top priority is her family and a good sentence for one day can make her turn into a super mom.

[8] **Connie Zheng, John Molineux, Sohelia Mirshekary and Simona Scarparo** conducted a multiple regression analysis based on survey of 700 employees of Queensland, Australia to scrutinize their WLB strategies and organisational WLB. The research was aimed at studying the factors of Work-life balance of an employee that affects their health along with the former statement. After examination, the results showed that the employees practicing their own strategies to balance work and life domains showed better mental health conditions than those who didn't. Employees were helped reduce stress due to availability and of WLB programmes. Variables such as age, income, working hours and so on were found to have effects on employee mental health. The same mental effects have a different level in women too since there are high expectations from their role. This opens up to a new line of study that would be based on studying variables such as genders and households separately to provide further enhanced tips for mental health wellbeing of individuals.

[9] **H. Shellae Versey** studied data from MIDUS II to provide the control strategies that mediate through a better work and life experiences. The results designated that positive re-evaluation act as a shield while decreasing ambition worsens the relation between work-family spillover and employee mental health. It is also seen that these moderating effects are more overwhelming among women. The research emphasizes on spillover effects and states how negative spillovers lead to stress, burnout and so on. Men and Women process work-family spillover silent differently since there's a huge difference between the psychologies, with women's top priority being family which multiplies their work. Health, family, social and environmental conditions play a major role on altering an individual's behaviour. An individual's perception and estimation of a stressful situation determined the occurring conflicts or non-occurrence of them between work and home. Non-supportive workplaces lead to negative spillover and so organisations should focus on coming up with strategies and few models for the jobs so that the employees have rewards and appreciations which keeps them motivated to increase their performances in the work-life interface.

[10] **Syed Mohammad Azeem and Nadeem Akhtar** used short version of Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire to measure job satisfaction. Organisational commitment was measured on 275 respondent's data. The regression analysis indicated that 37% difference in organizational commitment and job satisfaction is credited to work-life balance. It is stated that employees of healthcare workers

face new challenges to face internally and externally. Changes in work style, family needs and so on showed to have great impact on employee's work performance and overwhelming pressure forces them to negatively perceive the situation which impact work-life balance. The research concluded that for enhancing organisational commitment, work-life balance and job-satisfaction..... The job of healthcare workers is indeed very challenging, especially for women who have children to take care at home. It is necessary for mental health organisations to take care of these factors and provide with measures for good employee mental health so that job satisfaction and work-life balance are both reinforced.

[11] **Louise P Parkes and Peter H Langford** assessed an Australian survey to find whether employees are satisfied with their work-life balance ability. There is a mass research stating the importance of work-life balance for employee mental health wellbeing and family-job satisfaction. The article is based on how the ability to balance roles between work and home domains have negative and positive impact in both the ways. The growing number of workers, the changes and challenges that occur like working hours or work-load, working environment, balance strategies and so on have great influence on employee mental health. Employees perceive work-life balance as a desirable goal even though they may find it difficult to prioritise. Flexible organisations that provide good work facilities and appreciations to employees are more likely to attract workers. Especially for women, this is one of the factors where they seek job. This should also open up to vast topics of discussion such as individual psychology and sociology. The fair treatment at workplace reinforces their satisfaction with work-life interfaces and motivates them further.

[12] **Natasha Shaukat, Daniyal Mansoor Ali and Junaid Razzak** reviewed the physical and mental impacts on healthcare workers during the covid-19 pandemic. Arksey O'Malley framework was used and a structured literature search on PubMed and Google Scholar was conducted. The collected data was divided into physical and mental health impacts. The impacts were found to be caused by factors such as high risk departmental work, sparse hygiene (especially before and after contact with patients), diagnosed family member, direct and time of contact with patients, un-shielded exposure and so on. Fever, cough, weakness were common symptoms and long usage of PPE caused skin damage among healthcare workers. Female healthcare workers were the ones to be excessively affected by the high levels of distress, anxiety, insomnia and depression. The research concluded that caring for covid patients restlessly is impacting on the healthcare workers physically and mentally both. Home factors such as worried family members, single parent, dual partners, elders or new-borns also majorly affect the mental wellbeing of HCWs causing them to have thoughts such as giving up the job. Shorter work hour shifts, strict hygiene and availability of it, mental health support strategies are to be highly suggested for the wellbeing of the healthcare workers.

[13] **Hye Kyong Kim** used data collected from 293 workers in Korea and performed hypothesized model and hypothesis by regression analysis and structured equation modelling. The findings showed that an in-role performance

of work and life domain isn't directly affected by work-life balance. It was seen that positive perception of work-life balance led to affective commitment and that, again, led to improved performances as required at work and home. The analysis of effect of work-life balance caused on employee's mental health and behaviour. This article also seeks to compare the results of work-life balance between Asian countries and western countries. This would complete new study of how the culture and environment of vast countries effect the individual; this is to come up with different strategies of mental wellbeing of employees belonging to different countries. The whole of review's aim to come up with ways that could re-inforce positive commitment towards work-life roles and enhance the mental wellbeing of employees.

[14] **Mahima Nanda and Gurpreet Randhawa** reviewed existing literature on work-life balance and emotional intelligence to build a model that states the relations between these two variables. Emotional intelligence is a term that is influenced by the perception of challenges and situations of an individual. This perception impacts the employee's behaviour and attitude towards his/her work. Work-life balance interface mediates the relation between EI and mental wellbeing since a positive balance reinforces satisfaction in work role and family role. EI has direct relation with work stress, engagement and satisfaction. Especially, for women in Asian countries who are still coming up to 'equality' in the society, there is a need of work-life balance strategies so that the household and job role are both managed without raising conflicts that impact their mental wellbeing. Richer understandings of internal and external variables of mental wellbeing of EI and WLB have been provided in the review. This broadens the study of work-life balance and also provides us with various strategies to implement positive emotional intelligence, the deeper the understandings go.

FACTORS THAT EFFECT EMPLOYEE MENTAL HEALTH

- **Workplace-** The place where employees work does impact their performance. If employees spend a major part of their day in a close and compact cabin, the dull environs surely affect their mood as against a setting where daylight and greenery is visible. Therefore, ensuring small things like presence of daylight and/or a plant, and absence of dark and dull shades in their work rooms could lift the employee spirits. After all bright colours, according to colour psychology, are proven to help elevate the mood of an individual.
- **Horde-** It has also been found that crowds lead to employee job stress which also impacts their job satisfaction. Spaces allow them to feel free and relaxed, though how an individual perceives space varies in terms of their early environment experience. And hence, employees should be provided with a comfortable work place that is conducive to improved job performance and detrimental to stress
- **Long working hours** - Long working hours eat into family time as most of the day is spent at the workplace. It also leads to compromising on the 'me time'. Hence long working hours cause health problems when employees are unable to incorporate yoga, meditation and other wellness efforts. Moreover, very long hours hamper family life and an absence of balance between home and job lead to both family-work conflict and job stress.

- **Negative perception-** This is subjective in nature. Viewing work-life balance as a liability and having difficulty in concentrating is a sign of negative perception which leads to mental health problems. It usually reduces job performance and raises conflicts in both work and life domains. Therefore reading positive quotes, laugh therapy, exercise and so on should be practised by the workforce and encouraged by organizations to boost employee physical and mental state.
- **Background** - This factor depends on whether the employee belongs to a dual income family, a nuclear family, has an elder in their family, a single parent and so on. A single parent is likely to have more responsibility and take more stress while elders are worried about medication, health among other reasons. Though multiple factors play a role, what one can do to gain good mental health is to take care of themselves and their family.

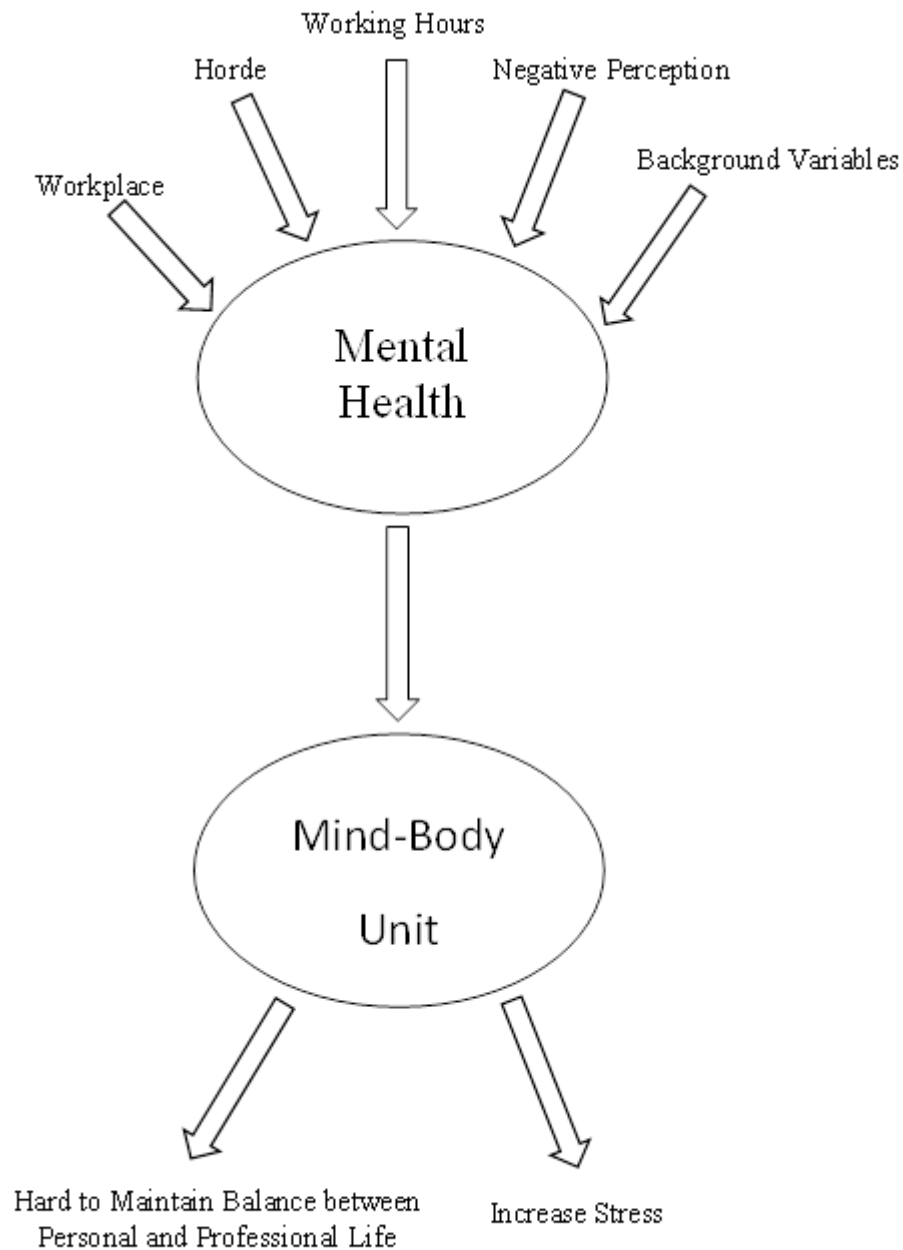


Fig 1: Representation of factors affecting mental health and their outcomes

CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The rapid changes in working systems, technology and policies are leading companies to fast transformation which is causing stress and anxiety to the lives of employees. The dynamic workplace leads to more work making it harder to

cope with such rapid transformation when it's only the work domain that changes and everything else remains the same. It has been globally observed that employees' physical health and mental wellbeing have declined because of the ascending degree of job outdate, downturns, unemployment, losses and so on, which in turn impacts the job performances and work-life balance ability. Wellness hence becomes mandatory both for employees and workplaces so that the outcomes of work and desired role-play in different interfaces also remain satisfactory. This, in turn, helps in reinforcing better environment, motivation and health. The strategies and objectives thus developed by the Human Resource Managers and Practitioners play a vital role towards betterment of employees, improved workplace and augmented results.

CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, the employees primarily need to have a positive perception of being able to balance work and life so that satisfaction is reinforced. The developing societies need to analyse all the variables to provide safe and appropriate work places, rewards and appreciation for employees to boost their motivation to work. It has also been seen that healthcare workers and women should be particularly taken care of since their role is tougher. The results prove that better work-places motivate employee performance while positive perception and less conflicts helps them balance work and life domains even though they still have difficulty in prioritising the importance. Mental well-being is what first shields the job stress and helps face challenges in an effective way, that is, in turning 'mistakes' into 'learnings'. Though the studies are mainly focused on how work-life balance and employee mental health impact each other, it is important for individuals to devise and organizations to provide strategies for employee mental wellbeing. All working citizens should consider talking to loved ones, exercising, yoga, and the like to become a harbinger of change.

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