# Work–Life Balance of Women Entrepreneurs in the South Gujarat Region: An Empirical Study

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## Abstract:

Women entrepreneurs play a vital role in fostering economic growth, innovation, and employment generation in India. However, balancing business responsibilities with personal and family commitments remains a significant challenge. This study examines the work–life balance of women entrepreneurs in the South Gujarat region using a quantitative research approach. Data were collected from 60 women entrepreneurs through a structured questionnaire to identify the key factors influencing their work–life balance. The findings reveal five major dimensions of work–life balance: Family fulfilments, Commitment Balance, Support Systems, Responsibility Management, and Stress Management. While the majority of respondents reported maintaining a positive work–life balance, many experienced challenges such as work-related stress, extended working hours, and difficulties in managing professional and family responsibilities. The study highlights the crucial role of family support, effective time management, and flexible work practices in improving the well-being and entrepreneurial performance of women entrepreneurs. The findings provide valuable insights for policymakers, entrepreneurship support organizations, and women entrepreneurs to develop strategies that promote sustainable entrepreneurship and enhance work–life balance.

## Introduction:

Women entrepreneurship has emerged as a significant contributor to economic development, employment generation, innovation, and social empowerment across the world. Entrepreneurs play a vital role in identifying business opportunities, mobilizing resources, and creating value through innovation and enterprise development. Women entrepreneurs perform diverse entrepreneurial functions, including opportunity identification, project planning, resource mobilization, financing, production, and business management, thereby contributing significantly to economic growth. In India, women's participation in entrepreneurship has increased considerably due to improved educational opportunities, changing social norms, and supportive government initiatives aimed at promoting entrepreneurship. Programmes such as Stand-Up India and various entrepreneurship development schemes have further encouraged women to establish and expand their businesses, leading to increased participation in sectors such as healthcare, education, manufacturing, retail, and technology.

The growing participation of women in entrepreneurship has attracted considerable academic attention. Charu Mani (2022) reported that women entrepreneurs significantly contribute to employment generation, innovation, and economic development despite facing challenges such as limited access to finance, inadequate mentoring, and societal biases. Similarly, Aggarwal and Jain (2014) observed that although government policies have

encouraged women entrepreneurship, socio-cultural barriers, gender stereotypes, and limited family support continue to hinder entrepreneurial growth. The Business Today (2019) report further projected a substantial increase in the number of women entrepreneurs in India, identifying financial independence, flexibility, and self-employment as major motivations, while emphasizing that access to formal finance remains a major constraint.

Gujarat has emerged as one of India's leading entrepreneurial states with a supportive ecosystem for business development. Patel and Patel (2018) found that women entrepreneurship in Gujarat has grown steadily because of favourable government policies and entrepreneurship support programmes. However, women entrepreneurs continue to encounter barriers such as limited access to finance, inadequate entrepreneurial skills, and cultural constraints. Welter and Brush (2014) further argued that entrepreneurial activities are shaped by gender roles, institutional support, social norms, and access to resources, indicating the need for a stronger gender perspective in entrepreneurship research. South Gujarat, with its expanding industrial and commercial activities, has witnessed increasing participation of women entrepreneurs across sectors including food processing, garments, education, healthcare, beauty services, and social enterprises, making it an important region for examining entrepreneurial experiences.

Despite the increasing participation of women in entrepreneurship, maintaining a balance between business responsibilities and personal life remains one of their greatest challenges. Women entrepreneurs simultaneously perform multiple roles as business owners, mothers, wives, daughters, and caregivers, making work–life balance a critical determinant of both entrepreneurial success and personal well-being. Agarwal and Lenka (2015) reported that women entrepreneurs frequently experience work–family conflict arising from business demands, family responsibilities, and societal expectations. Nevertheless, they employ coping strategies such as effective time management, delegation of responsibilities, and prioritization to manage competing demands. Similarly, Sharma (2020) highlighted that family support, flexible work arrangements, and childcare facilities significantly improve work–life balance among women entrepreneurs in Gujarat. Mathew and Panchanatham (2011) also found that family and social support play an essential role in reducing work–family conflict and improving entrepreneurial performance.

Previous studies have also identified several factors that influence the work–life balance of women entrepreneurs. Pareek and Bagrecha (2017) reported that financial constraints, gender discrimination, work pressure, and inadequate family support negatively affect women's ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities. Kim and Lee (2019) demonstrated

that strong social support networks positively influence work–life balance, psychological well-being, and business performance. Likewise, Garg and Khanna (2021) concluded that flexible work practices and support from family and friends enhance entrepreneurial performance. Research conducted in Gujarat by Patil and Yadav (2019), Patel and Dodiya (2019), and Kulkarni and Jhawar (2019) consistently identified time management, delegation, prioritization, and family support as key strategies adopted by women entrepreneurs to achieve work–life balance.

Although substantial research has examined women entrepreneurship and work–life balance in India and Gujarat, relatively limited empirical studies have specifically focused on women entrepreneurs in the South Gujarat region. The socio-economic characteristics, entrepreneurial ecosystem, and cultural context of South Gujarat may influence women's experiences differently from those in other regions. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the work–life balance of women entrepreneurs in South Gujarat by identifying the major factors influencing their ability to balance entrepreneurial and family responsibilities. The findings are expected to contribute to the existing literature and provide practical implications for policymakers, entrepreneurship support organizations, and women entrepreneurs in developing strategies that foster sustainable entrepreneurship and improve overall well-being.

## Methodology

### Research Design

The study adopted a quantitative research design to examine the work–life balance of women entrepreneurs in South Gujarat. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire comprising demographic questions and 24 work–life balance statements measured on a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was developed based on an extensive review of relevant literature.

### Sampling and Data Collection

The target population comprised women entrepreneurs operating businesses in the South Gujarat region, primarily Surat. A total of 60 women entrepreneurs were selected using purposive and convenience sampling techniques. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered either online or in printed form. The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure clarity and reliability, and respondents' confidentiality was maintained throughout the study.

### Data Analysis

The collected data were analysed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize respondent characteristics, while Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation was used to identify the underlying dimensions of work–life balance. The suitability of the data for factor analysis was confirmed through the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity before extracting the principal components.

## Data Analysis and Results

### Demographic Profile of Respondents

The study surveyed 60 women entrepreneurs from the South Gujarat region to understand their work–life balance experiences. The demographic analysis indicates that the respondents represented diverse age groups, educational backgrounds, family structures, business sectors, and entrepreneurial experience.

Figure 1 shows the age distribution of the respondents. The largest proportion (40%) belonged to the 25–35 years age group, followed by 30% below 25 years, 18.3% between 35–45 years, and 11.7% above 45 years. These findings indicate that women entrepreneurship in South Gujarat is primarily represented by young and early mid-career entrepreneurs who are actively engaged in establishing and expanding their businesses.

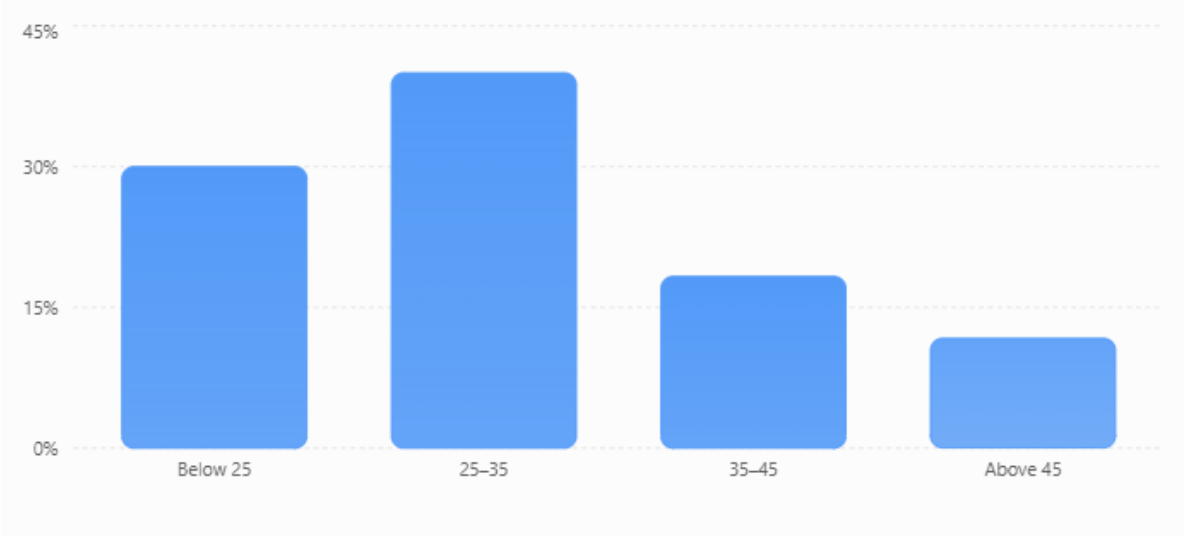



**Figure 1. Age Distribution of Respondents**

Figure 2 illustrates the educational qualifications of the respondents. The majority were well educated, with 38.3% holding undergraduate degrees and 36.7% possessing postgraduate qualifications. A smaller proportion had higher secondary education (11.7%), doctoral degrees (8.3%), and secondary education (5%). The findings suggest that higher educational attainment is associated with greater participation in entrepreneurial activities, reflecting the importance

of education in developing the knowledge, skills, and confidence required for successful entrepreneurship among women in South Gujarat.

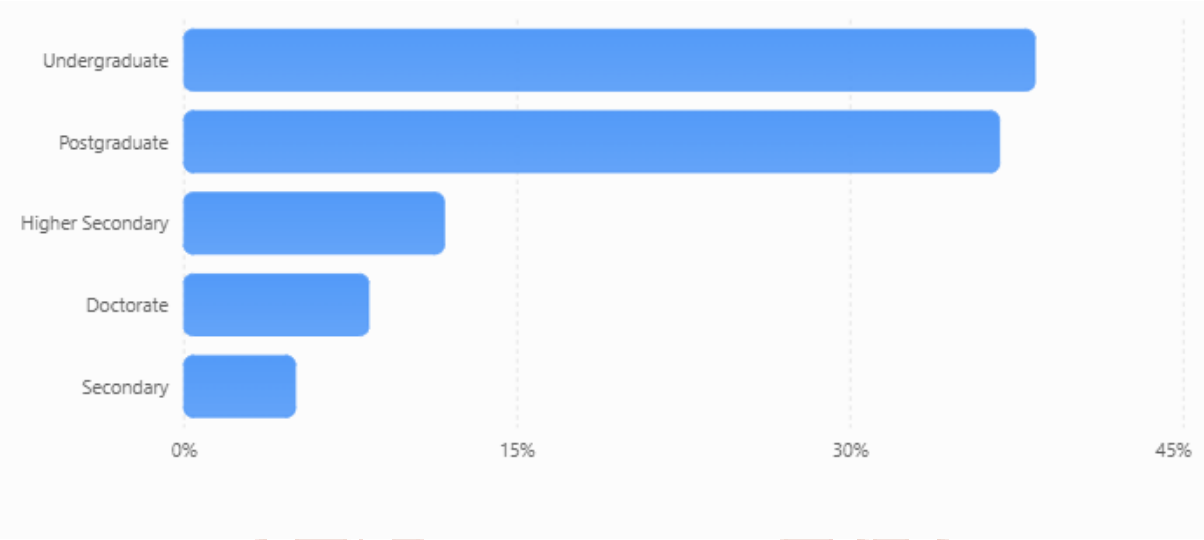



**Figure 2. Educational Qualification**

Figure 3 illustrates the family profile of the respondents. The majority (56.7%) of the respondents were married, while 43.3% were unmarried. In terms of family structure, 61.7% belonged to joint families, whereas 33.3% lived in nuclear families. The predominance of married women and joint family systems suggests that family support may play an important role in enabling women entrepreneurs to balance their business and household responsibilities. Such support can facilitate greater participation in entrepreneurial activities while helping them manage work–life balance effectively.

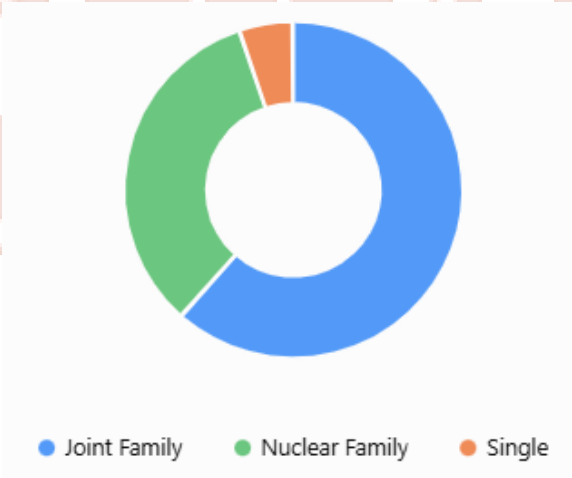



**Figure 3. Family Type**

Figure 4 presents the business profile of the respondents. The majority (55%) were engaged in the service sector, followed by 25% in manufacturing and 20% in retail businesses.

In terms of entrepreneurial experience, 33.3% had been operating their businesses for one to three years, while an equal proportion (26.7%) had less than one year or more than five years of entrepreneurial experience. Additionally, 35% of respondents managed their

businesses independently without employees, whereas the remaining respondents employed between one and more than ten workers, reflecting the presence of both micro and small enterprises. Monthly income analysis shows that the largest proportion (38.3%) earned between ₹10,001 and ₹30,000 per month.

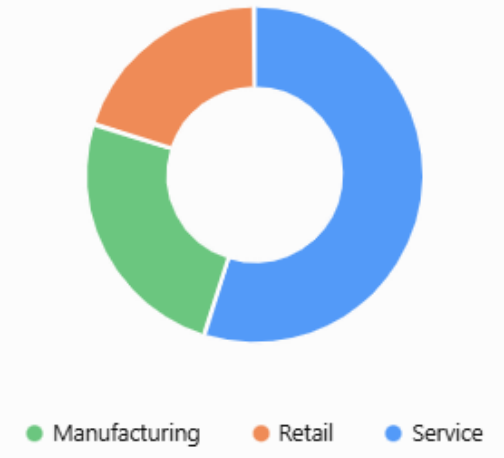



**Figure 4. Business Sector**

| Variable | Category | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Age | Below 25 years | 30.0 |
| | 25–35 years | 40.0 |
| | 35–45 years | 18.3 |
| | Above 45 years | 11.7 |
| Marital Status | Married | 56.7 |
| | Unmarried | 43.3 |
| Family Type | Joint Family | 61.7 |
| | Nuclear Family | 33.3 |
| Education | Undergraduate | 38.3 |
| | Postgraduate | 36.7 |
| Business Sector | Service | 55.0 |
| | Manufacturing | 25.0 |
| | Retail | 20.0 |

**Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents**

**Descriptive Analysis of Work–Life Balance**

The descriptive analysis indicates that most respondents perceived a relatively positive work–life balance despite facing multiple entrepreneurial and family responsibilities. A substantial majority (60%) reported receiving strong family support for their entrepreneurial activities, highlighting the importance of family encouragement in sustaining women-owned businesses. Approximately 73.3% stated that they could enjoy holidays with their families, while 43.3% reported that they were able to comfortably fulfil the basic requirements of their families.

However, several challenges remain evident. Around 60% of respondents indicated that they did not have sufficient time to spend with family and friends, while 65% reported difficulty in finding time to care for sick family members. Additionally, 38.3% acknowledged working extra hours to complete their work, and more than half frequently experienced pressure due to work deadlines and multiple responsibilities. These findings suggest that balancing entrepreneurial activities with family obligations remains a major concern for women entrepreneurs.

Despite these challenges, respondents demonstrated considerable resilience. Nearly 63.3% indicated that they could adjust their work schedules according to personal priorities, 41.7% regularly exercised and maintained their health, and 78.3% expressed that they genuinely enjoyed their work. Overall, 88.3% of respondents believed that they maintained a good work–life balance, suggesting that although entrepreneurial responsibilities create pressure, effective coping mechanisms and family support enable women entrepreneurs to balance their professional and personal lives successfully.

**Suitability of Data for Factor Analysis**

evaluated using the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The KMO value of 0.607 exceeded the recommended minimum threshold of 0.50, indicating acceptable sampling adequacy. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 626.860$, df = 253, $p < 0.001$), confirming that the variables were sufficiently correlated and suitable for factor analysis.

| KMO and Bartlett's Test | | |
|---|---|---|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | .607 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 626.860 |
| | df | 253 |
| | Sig. | <.001 |

**Table 2. KMO and Bartlett's Test**

**Principal Component Analysis**

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation and Kaiser Normalization was employed to identify the underlying dimensions of work–life balance. Five components with eigenvalues greater than one were extracted, jointly explaining 60.196% of the total variance. The first component accounted for 25.31% of the variance, followed by the second (13.81%), third (8.13%), fourth (6.96%), and fifth (5.99%). The cumulative variance explained indicates that these five components adequately represent the major dimensions influencing work–life balance among women entrepreneurs.

**Based on the rotated component matrix, the extracted components were interpreted as follows:**

- Family Fulfilment includes variables related to fulfilling family needs, enjoying holidays with family, participating in family responsibilities, and sharing work responsibilities, indicating the importance of maintaining harmony between entrepreneurial and family roles.
- Commitment Balance captures the reciprocal influence of professional and personal commitments, including work pressure, extra working hours, and the impact of professional responsibilities on personal relationships.
- Support Systems and Self-Care represents family support, health management, meeting work deadlines, and maintaining personal well-being, emphasizing the role of social support and self-care in achieving work–life balance.
- Responsibility Management includes the ability to manage social obligations, family emergencies, and balancing time between family and friends, reflecting effective management of multiple responsibilities.
- Stress and Work Management comprises variables associated with overtime, managing multiple projects, and work-related stress, indicating the psychological challenges experienced while balancing entrepreneurial responsibilities.

Overall, the PCA findings demonstrate that work–life balance among women entrepreneurs is a multidimensional construct influenced by family fulfilment, professional commitment, support systems, responsibility management, and stress management. These findings provide valuable insights into the key determinants of sustainable entrepreneurship among women in South Gujarat.

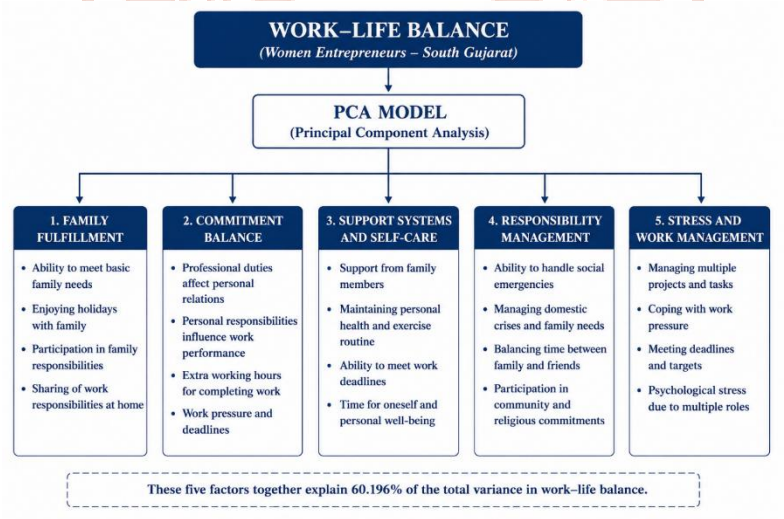



**Figure 5. Five Factors Identified by PCA**

Figure 5 presents the five dimensions of work–life balance identified through Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The analysis revealed that Family Fulfilment, Commitment Balance, Support Systems and Self-Care, Responsibility Management, and Stress and Work Management are the key factors influencing the work–life balance of women entrepreneurs in South Gujarat. Together, these five factors explain 60.196% of the total variance, indicating that work–life balance is a multidimensional construct shaped by both personal and professional aspects. The findings highlight the importance of family support, effective time and responsibility management, organizational commitment, self-care practices, and stress management in enabling women entrepreneurs to sustain their entrepreneurial activities while maintaining a healthy work–life balance.

## Discussion of Findings

### Work–Life Balance among Women Entrepreneurs

The findings indicate that the majority of women entrepreneurs in South Gujarat perceive themselves as maintaining a satisfactory work–life balance despite facing considerable professional pressures. Although 88.3% of the respondents reported having a good work–life balance, many also experienced work-related challenges, including pressure to meet deadlines, extended working hours, and the need to manage multiple responsibilities simultaneously.

This apparent contradiction suggests that work–life balance among women entrepreneurs should not be interpreted as the absence of work-related stress. Rather, it reflects their ability to integrate professional and personal responsibilities through effective time management, prioritization, delegation, and adaptive coping strategies. These findings are consistent with Agarwal and Lenka (2015), who argued that women entrepreneurs achieve work–life balance through role integration rather than by reducing work demands.

### Role of Family Support and Responsibility Management

The demographic findings reveal that most respondents were married and belonged to joint families, indicating that family support plays an important role in facilitating entrepreneurial activities. The PCA further identified Family Fulfilment, Support Systems and Self-Care, and Responsibility Management as key dimensions influencing work–life balance. These results suggest that emotional support, shared family responsibilities, and effective management of social and household obligations enable women entrepreneurs to balance business and family commitments more effectively. However, despite strong family support, respondents continued to experience challenges related to work pressure, caregiving

responsibilities, and maintaining personal well-being. This indicates that family support alone is insufficient to eliminate work–life conflicts, highlighting the need for additional organizational and social support mechanisms. These findings are consistent with Kim and Lee (2019), who emphasized the importance of social support networks in enhancing the work–life balance of women entrepreneurs.

**Principal Dimensions of Work–Life Balance**

Principal Component Analysis identified five major dimensions influencing work–life balance: Family Fulfilment, Commitment Balance, Support Systems and Self-Care, Responsibility Management, and Stress and Work Management. Together, these dimensions explained 60.196% of the total variance, demonstrating that work–life balance is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by personal, family, and professional factors. The findings indicate that sustainable entrepreneurship among women depends not only on business performance but also on supportive family environments, effective responsibility management, self-care practices, and strategies for managing occupational stress.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

**Conclusion**

This study examined the work–life balance of women entrepreneurs in South Gujarat using descriptive statistics and Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The findings indicate that the majority of respondents perceived themselves as maintaining a satisfactory work–life balance despite experiencing work pressure, extended working hours, and the challenge of balancing professional and family responsibilities. The demographic analysis revealed that most respondents were young entrepreneurs aged 25–35 years, well educated, married, and engaged primarily in service-sector businesses. The predominance of joint families among the respondents suggests that family support plays a significant role in enabling women entrepreneurs to manage both business and household responsibilities effectively.

The Principal Component Analysis identified five key dimensions influencing work–life balance: Family Fulfilment, Commitment Balance, Support Systems and Self-Care, Responsibility Management, and Stress and Work Management. Together, these dimensions explained 60.196% of the total variance, confirming that work–life balance is a multidimensional construct shaped by personal, family, and professional factors. The findings highlight that successful women entrepreneurs maintain work–life balance not by reducing their workload but by effectively integrating entrepreneurial responsibilities with family commitments through time management, family support, and adaptive coping strategies.

Overall, the study concludes that achieving sustainable entrepreneurship requires a supportive ecosystem comprising strong family support, effective responsibility management, organizational flexibility, and individual resilience. While women entrepreneurs in South Gujarat have demonstrated a remarkable ability to balance multiple roles, continued work pressure and caregiving responsibilities remain important challenges. Therefore, policymakers, entrepreneurship development institutions, and business support organizations should promote mentoring, flexible work practices, stress management programmes, and family-friendly policies to strengthen the well-being, productivity, and long-term sustainability of women-owned enterprises.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Government agencies and entrepreneurship development institutions should organize regular training programmes on work–life balance, stress management, leadership, and time management for women entrepreneurs.
- Financial institutions and policy makers should provide targeted support schemes, mentorship programmes, and networking opportunities to strengthen women-led enterprises.
- Business organizations should encourage delegation, teamwork, and flexible work arrangements to reduce excessive workload and improve productivity.
- Family members should actively participate in sharing household responsibilities to enable women entrepreneurs to devote adequate time to both business and personal commitments.
- Women entrepreneurs should adopt effective planning, prioritization, digital business tools, and self-care practices to improve productivity while maintaining their physical and mental well-being.
- Entrepreneurship support organizations should establish counselling, mentoring, and peer-support networks that help women entrepreneurs manage business challenges and maintain healthy work–life balance.

## Limitations and Future Research

The present study is limited to a sample of women entrepreneurs from the South Gujarat region and therefore the findings may not be generalizable to all regions of India. The study employed a cross-sectional research design and focused primarily on descriptive statistics and Principal Component Analysis.

Future research may expand the geographical scope by including women entrepreneurs from different states and sectors. Researchers may also employ larger sample sizes and advanced analytical techniques such as Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) or longitudinal studies to examine the causal relationships between work–life balance, entrepreneurial performance, psychological well-being, and business sustainability. Additionally, future studies may investigate the influence of digital entrepreneurship, government support, financial literacy, and technological adoption on the work–life balance of women entrepreneurs.

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