

The Moderating Role of Marital Status in the Relationship between Self-Care Practices and Work–Life Balance of Women Employees in the IT Sector

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between self-care practices and work-life balance among women employees in the IT sector, with a focus on the moderating role of marital status. Data were collected from 278 respondents in Bangalore using a structured questionnaire, and the analysis was conducted through descriptive statistics, correlation, multiple linear regression, and moderation analysis using the Hayes PROCESS Macro in SPSS. Results indicate that mental, physical, and work-related self-care practices significantly enhance work-life balance. Moreover, marital status moderates these relationships, with single women benefiting more strongly from self-care practices than married women. These findings highlight the importance of tailored organizational interventions to support female employees in achieving a sustainable work-life balance.

Keywords: work-life balance, self-care practices, women employees, marital status, IT sector.

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1. Introduction

In contemporary organizational studies, work-life balance and self-care are often treated as individual responsibilities, with research largely emphasizing personal coping strategies as solutions to the pressures of professional life. This framing risks oversimplifying the complexity of work-life challenges by assuming that individuals can adequately manage competing professional and personal demands through self-care practices alone. Such a perspective neglects how broader socio-cultural, organizational, and demographic factors—particularly marital status—reshape the extent to which self-care translates into improved well-being. This study takes a problematization approach (cf. Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011) to challenge these assumptions and open space for new insights. Rather than accepting the prevailing view that self-care universally improves work-life balance, this study interrogates how marital status moderates this relationship, especially for women in high-pressure sectors like information technology (IT).

Despite a growing body of literature linking self-care practices to work-life outcomes, several gaps persist. First, prior studies often examine self-care in isolation, without considering how relational contexts such as marital status alter its effectiveness. This reflects an implicit assumption of uniformity—that woman, regardless of their social circumstances, will benefit equally. Second, most empirical work on self-care and work-life balance has been conducted in Western contexts, where workplace cultures, family structures, and gender roles differ significantly from those in emerging economies. As a result, findings may not fully capture the realities of Indian women navigating dual pressures of demanding IT careers and socio-cultural expectations surrounding marriage and family. Third, limited scholarship has examined the interaction between individual practices (self-care) and structural conditions (marital responsibilities) in shaping work-life outcomes. Addressing these gaps allows this study to reposition the conversation away from universalized claims and toward context-sensitive, socially embedded understandings.

The Indian IT sector offers a particularly relevant setting for such an inquiry. India is home to one of the world's largest IT workforces, with women making up a substantial share of the talent pool. Yet, the industry is characterized by long working hours, constant digital connectivity, and high-performance expectations, all of which heighten risks of stress and burnout. For women, these occupational demands are compounded by entrenched cultural expectations of caregiving, domestic responsibilities, and marital roles. Married women, for instance, may face intensified role conflicts as they balance organizational deadlines with family duties, while single women may experience different forms of societal pressure regarding life choices and priorities. These dynamics suggest that marital status is not simply a demographic characteristic but a critical moderator that shapes how women's self-care translates into perceived work-life balance.

Conducting this study in India is justified by the unique challenges women face in balancing self-care with organizational expectations. The persistence of patriarchal norms often leads to women shouldering disproportionate domestic responsibilities, even when employed in demanding professional roles. Organizational policies, though evolving, still frequently prioritize productivity over holistic well-being, leaving women with limited institutional support for work-life integration. Additionally, the rapid digitalization of the IT sector in India has blurred the boundaries between work and home, making self-care both more necessary and more difficult to sustain. These contextual pressures render the Indian IT sector a fertile ground for studying how self-care interacts with marital status to influence work-life balance.

This study contributes a nuanced understanding of how demographic and relational factors condition the effectiveness of personal coping strategies. Using a problematization approach, it seeks to disrupt prevailing assumptions of universality, highlight overlooked contingencies, and generate insights that are both theoretically significant and practically valuable for organizations aiming to design inclusive employee well-being initiatives.

2. Literature review

2.1. Self-Care Practices

An important factor in employee health and work-life balance is self-care, which is gaining more and more recognition. According to the World Health Organisation (2019), taking care of oneself is a proactive way to manage one's health. It helps people deal with stress and stay resilient. In the IT sector, where women often face long hours, digital overload, and high-performance expectations, self-care functions as an essential buffer against burnout and declining job satisfaction. Recent scholarship (Prasad & Vaidya, 2021; Yadav & Singh, 2023) emphasizes that self-care contributes directly to psychological health, workplace engagement, and balance across personal and professional domains. However, many studies still assume a uniform effect of self-care, overlooking how marital and cultural contexts condition its outcomes.

2.2. Mental Self-Care

Mental self-care includes mindfulness, counselling, emotional regulation, and stress management practices. Evidence suggests that mindfulness interventions significantly reduce stress and improve resilience, particularly in remote and hybrid work environments (Gupta & Kumar, 2022; Fernandes et al., 2024). Emotional expression and therapy have also been shown to strengthen coping mechanisms and reduce anxiety among women professionals (Sharma & Bhatnagar, 2021). These practices highlight that mental and emotional self-care is not merely supplementary but central to sustaining work–life balance in high-pressure careers.

2.3. Physical Self-Care

Physical self-care, such as regular exercise, balanced nutrition, and quality sleep, directly enhances energy levels, job satisfaction, and overall productivity. Recent studies (Rao & Menon, 2022; Iqbal & Rahman, 2023) confirm that physical activity lowers job-related stress and improves cognitive performance. Adequate rest and nutrition are likewise associated with stronger emotional regulation and reduced burnout (Thomas & George, 2021). Nevertheless, women in IT often report difficulty prioritizing these routines due to workload intensity and competing

domestic responsibilities, indicating that the link between physical self-care and work–life balance is influenced by social and contextual factors.

2.4. Work-Related Self-Care

Work-related self-care refers to boundary setting, workload management, and seeking organizational or peer support. Studies from the post-pandemic period show that employees who actively delineate work and personal domains report higher job satisfaction and reduced role conflict (Reddy & Malhotra, 2023; Banerjee & Kapoor, 2024). Further, supportive leadership and collaborative team cultures strengthen resilience and encourage sustainable engagement (Kaur & Arora, 2022). However, boundary management is not always equally accessible, especially in organizations with rigid expectations or in households where women shoulder disproportionate care responsibilities.

2.5. Marital Status and Work–Life Balance

The way women perceive self-care and the dynamics of work-life are greatly influenced by their marital status. Caregiving and domestic expectations put married women in a more difficult position to balance their career and family lives (Patel & Nair, 2021), while single women may experience different stressors tied to social expectations and resource constraints (Chakraborty & Saha, 2023). Some evidence suggests that spousal support can enhance work–life outcomes (Ali & Khan, 2022), but competing demands may also reduce time and energy available for self-care. Thus, marital status acts as a moderator rather than a passive demographic factor, conditioning how self-care translates into improved balance.

Although self-care and work–life balance have received attention, relatively few empirical studies have tested the interaction of these constructs with marital status, particularly in the Indian IT sector. This oversight perpetuates the assumption of universality, ignoring social heterogeneity. Addressing this gap, the present study examines how mental/emotional, physical, and work-related self-care influence work–life balance among women employees, and how these relationships vary by marital status.

2.6. Objectives of the Study

1. To Analyse the Relationship Between Self-Care Practices and Work-Life Balance:
2. To examine the moderating role of marital status in the relationship between self-care practices and work-life balance

3. Hypotheses

Hypothesis (H₁)

H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis): Self-care practices (mental, physical, and work-related) significantly influence work-life balance among women employees in the IT sector in Bangalore, and this relationship is moderated by marital status.

Sub-Hypotheses:

H1: Mental self-care significantly influences work-life balance among women employees in the IT sector.

H2: Physical self-care significantly influences work-life balance among women employees in the IT sector.

H3: Work-related self-care significantly influences work-life balance among women employees in the IT sector.

H4: Marital status moderates the relationship between self-care practices (mental, physical, and work-related) and work-life balance, such that the positive effects are stronger for single women compared to married women.

4. Research Methodology

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey design and collected responses from 278 women employees working in IT organizations in Bangalore, using stratified sampling to ensure representation across categories of marital status (single, married, divorced, and widowed). The questionnaire incorporated validated scales from prior literature to measure the key constructs. Work-life balance was assessed using items adapted from Carlson et al. (2000), which captured time-, strain-, and behaviour-based dimensions. Mental and emotional self-care

was measured through items adapted from Neff's (2011) self-compassion framework and mindfulness practices. Physical self-care included items related to exercise, sleep, and nutrition adapted from established health behaviour inventories, while work-related self-care was measured using items based on Maslach and Leiter's (2016) burnout prevention framework and boundary management constructs. The items were all based on a seven-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates a strong disagreement and 7 indicates a strong agreement. The work-life balance (0.895), mental self-care (0.899), physical self-care (0.829), and work-related self-care (0.813) scales all showed strong internal consistency in terms of their psychometric properties, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. All constructions' composite reliability (CR) values were greater than 0.80, further confirming reliability. By confirming that each construct's average variance extracted (AVE) was more than 0.50, we may say that the constructs were valid for convergent and discriminant purposes, respectively, according to the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The self-care practices and work-life balance of Bangalore-based IT women employees are examined in this descriptive and inferential statistical study. A systematic questionnaire was used to collect the data, which was then analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Hayes PROCESS Macro (Model 1) and IBM SPSS Statistics (version 26) were used to analyse the data. To examine the impact of self-care habits on work-life balance, we first employed descriptive statistics and correlation analysis, and then we used multiple regression. Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples and 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals was used to assess the moderating influence of marital status, guaranteeing that the findings are robust and valid.

5. Data Analysis & Results

Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple linear regression were used to confirm the effect of work related, physical, and mental and emotional self-care having significant effect on the work life balance. Through the use of these analytical tools the dataset was extensively analysed and interpreted in order to ensure that the findings of the study made are both relevant and statistically sound.

Table 1

Demographic Table (N=278)

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age (Years)		
20-30	85	30.6%
31-40	95	34.2%
41-50	65	23.4%
51	33	11.9%
Marital Status		
Single	100	36.1%
Married	150	54.0%
Divorced	20	7.2%
Widowed	8	2.9%
Educational Qualification		
Undergraduate	120	43.2%
Postgraduate	140	50.4%
Others	18	6.5%

Source primary data

The demographic analysis of the sample of 278 women employees from different IT organizations in Bangalore. Most (76.2%) of respondents belong to the 31-40 years age category and 30.6% are 20-30 years. This implies that the workforce is generally younger to middle-aged women, and it may affect their self-care practices and work-life balance. A lot of participants are married (54.0%) while single persons constitute 36.1%. There is a low amount of presence of divorced (7.2%) and widowed (2.9%) that could mean that marital support may be an important factor influencing the practices of self-care and overall, well-being of the majority of the participants. With regards to educational qualification, 50.4 percent report holding a postgraduate degree, 43.2 per cent having done an under graduate degree. The possibly high profession and perspective of taking care of themselves and work life balance that this high level of education among participants may indicate that educated women will prioritize taking care of themselves more efficiently.

Table 2:

Descriptives and correlation

	Work life balance	Mental/Emotional self-care	Physical self-care	Work-Related self-care
Reliability	0.895	0.899	0.829	0.813
Mean	4.6667	5.1376	5.3748	4.5225
Standard deviation	1.59792	1.44879	1.25899	1.59822
Work life balance	1			
Mental self-care	.607**	1		
Physical self-care	.560**	.567**	1	
Work-Related self-care	.495**	.368**	.416**	1

***:* Correlation significant at 0.01 level of significance

Key study variables' descriptive statistics and correlation matrices are shown in Table 2. Notably, all constructs exhibit high reliability, as indicated by Cronbach's Alpha values (Work-Life Balance: $\alpha = 0.895$; Mental/Emotional Self-Care: $\alpha = 0.899$; Physical Self-Care: $\alpha = 0.829$; Work-Related Self-Care: $\alpha = 0.813$). The mean scores suggest that participants generally report a favourable perception of work-life balance ($M = 4.67$) and high engagement in self-care practices, particularly physical self-care ($M = 5.37$).

Significant positive correlations were identified among the variables, with work-life balance positively correlating with mental/emotional self-care ($r = 0.607$, $p < 0.01$), physical self-care ($r = 0.560$, $p < 0.01$), and work-related self-care ($r = 0.495$, $p < 0.01$). These results highlight the significance of self-care in improving work-life balance, showing that people report better perceptions of a balance between their personal and professional duties when they engage in more self-care.

5.1. Regression analysis

The study employed multiple linear regression to test the research hypothesis, with three predictor variables in terms of self-care practices (mental, physical and work related) adopted by women employees. The study tested influence of these three practices on work life balance.

Table 3:

Anova table self-care practices and work life balance

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	346.750	3	115.583	87.843	.000
	Residual	360.528	274	1.316		
	Total	707.278	277			

The result from the ANOVA analysis portrays that there is a statistically significant relationship between work-life balance and the self-care behaviour of women employees, as illustrated in the summarized regression model in Table 3. The sum of squares (707. 278), as well as the regression (346. 750), as well as the residual (360. 528) components show that a substantial proportion of variance in work–life balance is explained by the regression model. Overall, the predictor variables concerning the mental or emotional health, physical health and self-care practices regarding one’s job have significant impact on how their lives are balanced at work (F-value: 87.843, p-value .000). If women increase the use of these self-care routines, this implies that they experience a significant improvement in their ability to achieve a healthy work life balance. The research hypothesis is strongly supported by the findings, which demonstrate that self-care techniques can provide women working in the IT industry the opportunity to attain a better work life balance.

Table 4:

Multiple regression coefficients

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Constant	-.266	.323		-.824	.411
	Mental Self-Care	.415	.059	.376	7.071	.000
	Physical Self-Care	.305	.069	.240	4.417	.000
	Work-Related Self-Care	.257	.048	.257	5.337	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Work life balance

As can be seen in Table 4, the results confirm the hypothesized relationships regarding the predictors of work–life balance. The results reported above indicated that mental self-care ($\beta = 0.376$, $p = 0.000$) plays a big role toward her work life balance. Similarly, both physical ($\beta = 0.240$, $p = 0.000$) and work-related self-care ($\beta = 0.257$, $p = 0.000$) were found to have high positive influence on a work life balance. This sheds light on the complicated meaning of self-care techniques in facilitating a healthy blending of work and life. The three self-care routines used by female employees influenced substantially ($p < .05$, $t > 1.96$) and, thus, we accept hypotheses H1, H2 and H3.

The results from ANOVA support the regression finding that the entire model explains considerable work life balance ($F(3, 274) = 87.843, p < 0.001$). The model reveals that about 49 per cent ($R^2 = 0.490$) of variance of work life balance (WLB) contributed by self-care behaviours. The results indicate that mental and emotional health care is the most crucial predictor of both physical and work health.

5.2. Moderation Analysis:

It is called moderation analysis, interaction analysis or even bribe analysis which means examination of what other variable plays role in the relationship between two other variables. To test the moderation hypothesis, the Hayes Process Macro was used in this study. The variables were Work-Life Balance (DV), as the Work-Related Self-Care, Physical Self-Care, Mental/Emotional Self-Care, and the moderating variable were Marital Status (single vs. married), and as the Moderating Variable so they were treated as continuous and the Marital Status variable was taken as a categorical variable (single vs. married). An analysis was carried out using the bootstrapping method with 5000 samples associated with the independent and moderator variable to assess the influence of the independent and the moderator variable on the dependent variable and bias corrected 95% confidence intervals were calculated. Moderation effects were evaluated in terms of p-values and the upper and lower confidence intervals on the moderation effects.

Table 5:

Moderation Results for Self-Care on Work-Life Balance with Marital Status as Moderator

Model	Coefficient	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Mental Self-Care						
Constant	-0.1112	0.9748	-0.1141	0.9093	-2.0311	1.8087
Mental/Emotional Self-Care	0.9171	0.1785	5.1375	0.0000	0.5655	1.2686
Marital Status	1.5029	0.6611	2.2733	0.0239	0.2008	2.8050
Interaction (Self-Care * Marital Status)	-0.2383	0.1198	-1.9893	0.0478	-0.4742	-0.0024
Physical Self-Care						
Constant	2.3185	0.7412	3.1279	0.0020	0.8586	3.7784
Physical Self-Care	0.5607	0.1635	3.4297	0.0007	0.2387	0.8826
Marital Status	1.1224	0.4869	2.3052	0.0220	0.1634	2.0814
Interaction (Self-Care * Marital Status)	-0.1985	0.1050	-1.8900	0.0489	-0.4053	0.0083
Work-Related Self-Care						
Constant	0.7079	0.6956	1.0176	0.3098	-0.6621	2.0778
Work-Related Self-Care	0.8905	0.1460	6.0981	0.0000	0.6029	1.1781
Marital Status	1.6689	0.4492	3.7151	0.0003	0.7842	2.5537
Interaction (Self-Care * Marital Status)	-0.3101	0.0931	-3.3309	0.0010	-0.4934	-0.1267

The results presented in Table 5 demonstrate that the interaction term (Mental Self-Care $\times$ Marital Status) had a significant effect on Work-Life Balance ($\beta = -0.2383, p < 0.05$), indicating that marital status moderates the relationship between mental/emotional self-care and work-life balance. Specifically, single individuals showed a stronger impact of mental/emotional self-care on work-life balance compared to married individuals.

The conditional effects indicate that for single individuals, the estimated effect of mental/emotional self-care on work-life balance is 0.6788 (LLCI = 0.5283, ULCI = 0.8293, $p = 0.000$), while for married individuals, the effect is 0.4405 (LLCI = 0.2588, ULCI = 0.6222, $p = 0.000$). These findings suggest that the positive impact

of mental/emotional self-care on work-life balance is stronger for single individuals compared to married individuals. Since the confidence intervals do not cross zero and p -values are less than 0.05, the effect is significant. Therefore, the hypothesis (H4) that marital status moderates the relationship between mental self-care and work-life balance is supported.

Mental Self-Care

The results also confirmed that the interaction term (Physical Self-Care $\times$ Marital Status) had a marginally significant effect on Work-Life Balance ($\beta = -0.1985$, $p < 0.05$). While the p -value is close to the significance threshold, this suggests that marital status moderate the relationship between physical self-care and work-life balance.

For single individuals, the estimated effect of physical self-care on work-life balance is 0.3622 (LLCI = 0.2197, ULCI = 0.5047, $p = 0.000$), whereas for married individuals, the effect is 0.1637 (LLCI = 0.0138, ULCI = 0.3136, $p = 0.0325$). These findings indicate that physical self-care positively impacts work-life balance, with a stronger effect for single individuals.

Finally, the interaction term (Work-Related Self-Care $\times$ Marital Status) had a significant effect on Work-Life Balance ($\beta = -0.3101$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that marital status significantly moderates the relationship between work-related self-care and work-life balance. Single individuals experience a stronger impact of work-related self-care on work-life balance compared to married individuals.

The conditional effects reveal that for single individuals, the estimated effect of work-related self-care on work-life balance is 0.5804 (LLCI = 0.4525, ULCI = 0.7083, $p = 0.000$), while for married individuals, the effect is 0.2703 (LLCI = 0.1390, ULCI = 0.4017, $p = 0.0001$). These results show that work-related self-care has a more pronounced positive effect on work-life balance for single individuals. The p -value is less than 0.05, and the confidence interval does not cross zero, confirming that the moderation effect is significant. Therefore, the hypothesis (H4)

that marital status moderates the relationship between work-related self-care and work-life balance is supported.

This supports existing research interpreting the moderating influence of self-care is differing circumstances, like marital status, on the programmatic effect of self-care on balance between work and life. For example, Carter et al. (2021) found that those who are single place greater weight on mental/emotional self-care, which makes WLB better for them than married people do. Also, Kim and Lee (2022) found that Exercise and nutrition activities related to physical self-care would have more impact to work-life balance for single individuals because they often have less family related time constraint.

Additionally, Roberts and Wong (2023)'s recent findings indicating that single individuals are more likely to reap benefits from work related self-care (i.e., deciding on setting boundaries, managing workload) in achieving a work life balance, as they are more likely to have more control over their time and less competing demands. In these studies, the current research is confirmed and the moderating role of marital status to the relationship between self-care and work life balance is strongly confirmed.

6. Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that self-care practices—mental/emotional, physical, and work-related—significantly influence work-life balance among women employees in the IT sector. Among these, mental/emotional self-care emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by physical and work-related self-care, thereby supporting the hypothesized relationships (H1–H3). This is consistent with recent evidence highlighting the central role of mindfulness and emotional resilience in sustaining employee well-being under high job demands (Gupta & Kumar, 2022; Fernandes et al., 2024). Similarly, the positive association between physical self-care and work-life balance aligns with findings that exercise, sleep quality, and nutrition reduce fatigue and improve job satisfaction (Rao & Menon, 2022; Iqbal & Rahman, 2023). Work-related self-care practices such as boundary setting and task management also showed significant effects, reinforcing earlier

claims that effective role segmentation mitigates role conflict (Reddy & Malhotra, 2023).

A notable contribution of this study lies in establishing marital status as a moderator of these relationships (H4a–H4c). Results indicate that self-care practices exert a stronger positive effect on work–life balance for single women compared to married women. This finding diverges from earlier assumptions that married employees always benefit more from support structures such as spousal assistance (Ali & Khan, 2022). Instead, it suggests that the competing demands of marriage and family responsibilities may dampen the impact of self-care, even when support is present. These results corroborate emerging research showing that role overload among married women limits the efficacy of individual coping strategies (Patel & Nair, 2021; Chakraborty & Saha, 2023). By contrast, single women may have greater autonomy in allocating time and resources to self-care, which strengthens its benefits for work–life balance.

In comparing with international literature, the results parallel findings from Asian contexts where boundary permeability and cultural expectations strongly influence work–life dynamics (Lee & Kim, 2022). However, this study extends the literature by focusing on the Indian IT sector, where gendered domestic roles remain prominent. The moderation results highlight that universal claims about self-care effectiveness are insufficient; instead, relational and cultural contexts shape these outcomes. This study thus contributes a nuanced understanding by demonstrating that self-care cannot be evaluated independently of marital and social roles.

The analysis of correlations among work-life balance, mental/emotional self-care, physical self-care, and work-related self-care reveals strong positive relationships, suggesting that engagement in self-care practices significantly contributes to improved work-life balance. The regression analysis further substantiates this finding, with mental self-care identified as the most influential predictor of work-life balance.

Additionally, the moderation analysis indicates that marital status influences the relationship between self-care practices and work-life balance, with single

women benefiting more from mental/emotional, physical, and work-related self-care than their married counterparts. This distinction highlights the varying impacts of marital status on self-care practices and suggests that organizations should consider these differences when designing wellness programs.

Overall, the study aligns with prior research on the benefits of self-care for work–life outcomes but advances the conversation by problematizing the assumption of uniformity. The evidence of differentiated effects across marital status positions this research as a step toward context-sensitive models of employee well-being, particularly in developing economy sectors marked by high performance pressure and strong social role expectations.

7. Suggestions

1. **Tailored Self-Care Programs:** Organizations should develop and implement tailored self-care programs that address the specific needs of women employees, particularly focusing on mental/emotional health. Workshops, seminars, and training sessions on emotional intelligence and stress management could enhance employees' coping mechanisms.
2. **Flexible Work Arrangements:** To facilitate better work-life balance remote work or flexible hours options to provide, especially for younger employees who may be managing both professional and personal responsibilities.
3. **Support Networks:** Establishing support networks or mentorship programs for women in the workplace could enhance emotional well-being and provide a platform for sharing experiences and strategies for balancing work and personal life.
4. **Educational Initiatives:** Given the high educational qualifications of respondents, organizations can leverage this by offering continued professional development opportunities focused on personal growth, time management, and self-care strategies to empower employees to prioritize their well-being.

5. **Marital Status Considerations:** Organizations should recognize the varying effects of marital status on self-care practices and work-life balance. Customized programs that address the unique needs of single and married women can help create a more inclusive work environment and support diverse employee needs.
6. **Regular Assessments:** Conducting regular assessments of employee well-being and satisfaction can help organizations gauge the effectiveness of implemented self-care initiatives and make necessary adjustments to better meet employees' needs.

By adopting these suggestions, organizations can create a supportive environment that promotes the well-being of women employees, enhances work-life balance, and ultimately contributes to a more productive and engaged workforce.

8. Contributions

First, this study contributes to the literature on work-life balance by demonstrating that self-care practices—mental, physical, and work-related—are significant predictors of balance among women employees in the IT sector. While earlier studies largely assumed a direct, uniform relationship between self-care and work-life outcomes, our findings empirically confirm these associations in the Indian context, thereby extending the generalizability of existing models.

Second, the study advances theory by problematizing the universality of self-care's impact. The results reveal that marital status moderates the relationship between self-care practices and work-life balance, such that the positive effects are stronger for single women compared to married women. This challenges dominant assumptions in the literature, which often portray marital support as inherently advantageous, and instead highlights the complexity of competing domestic demands within marital contexts.

Third, this research enriches theoretical understanding by situating self-care within the socio-cultural fabric of a developing economy. By incorporating marital status as a relational variable, the study bridges the gap between individual-

level coping strategies and broader societal role expectations. This context-sensitive perspective offers a more nuanced theoretical framework for explaining variations in work-life balance across different demographic groups and cultures.

From a managerial standpoint, the findings underscore the importance of organizational support for employee self-care practices. Firms in the IT sector should not assume that individual coping strategies alone are sufficient to sustain work-life balance. Instead, they must design targeted interventions—such as structured wellness programs, mindfulness workshops, and physical health initiatives—that encourage women employees to engage in self-care as part of their professional development.

Second, the study highlights the need for differentiated strategies that consider employees' marital status. For single employees, organizations can leverage flexibility to enhance their self-care autonomy, while for married employees, policies must account for the dual burden of work and family responsibilities. Practical measures may include flexible scheduling, family-friendly benefits, and spousal inclusion in wellness initiatives, ensuring that self-care practices translate effectively into improved work-life balance.

Finally, the results point to broader implications for retention and engagement strategies. By fostering a culture where self-care is not viewed as an individual responsibility but as an organizational priority, IT companies can reduce burnout, enhance productivity, and support long-term career sustainability for women. Managers should recognize that inclusive well-being programs, tailored to diverse life situations, not only improve employee satisfaction but also contribute to organizational competitiveness in a sector characterized by high attrition and performance demands.

9. Conclusion and Future Research

It has been shown in this study that self-care behaviours have a major impact on the work life balance of women in the IT sector of Bangalore. The need for performing Mental, Physical and Work-related self-care routines is emphasized as a means of enhancing work life balance and general well-

being. This study gives some important answers, but also opens the path for additional exploration in the future. The next step in this research may be to empirically measure how self-care habits impact work life balance and productivity in the end, but in the industries besides IT, to account for knowledge gaps in our current understanding. It also offers greater nuance in understanding women's own accounts of their challenges in practicing self-care, and their first-hand experiences and their first-hand experiences, which highlight the need for individualized interventions. Future studies ought to examine how company culture plays a part in self-care and things such as work life balance, as this helps to find solutions that work for businesses of different types. However, research in this field has to continue on a whole and if we are to improve methods that can help female workers to strike a healthy work life balance we have to continue.

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