

A Gendered Comparison Of Work-Life Balance And Social Support Among Entrepreneurs And Non-Entrepreneurs

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Abstract:

Background: Work-life balance (WLB) and social support (SS) significantly impact entrepreneurs' well-being, particularly women managing dual roles. In semi-urban Indian contexts, women entrepreneurs often face unique WLB challenges due to societal expectations and family responsibilities. This study aimed to compare WLB and SS among women entrepreneurs, men entrepreneurs, and women non-entrepreneurs.

Materials and Methods: A sample of 507 participants—176 women entrepreneurs, 161 men entrepreneurs, and 170 women non-entrepreneurs from semi-urban areas was surveyed. Standardized tools measured WLB and SS. Data were analyzed using correlation, MANOVA, and post hoc tests.

Results: No significant differences were found in social support across the three groups, suggesting that entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs, regardless of gender, receive similar levels of emotional and instrumental support. However, women entrepreneurs reported significantly greater difficulty in maintaining WLB compared to men entrepreneurs and women non-entrepreneurs. These challenges were linked to irregular schedules, higher work demands, and greater spillover between personal and professional life. Although women entrepreneurs employed strategies like problem-solving to improve WLB, they struggled with conflicting expectations at home and work. Gendered roles and unequal household responsibilities intensified their stress and role conflict. A moderate positive correlation between SS and WLB indicated that support, especially from family, enhances balance but cannot fully counteract structural barriers.

Conclusion: The findings highlight the need for targeted interventions such as flexible work policies, support networks, and gender-sensitive strategies to improve WLB and well-being among women entrepreneurs.

Keywords: women entrepreneurs, social support, work-life balance, work/life behavioral constrainters, work/life behavioral enhancers

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I. Introduction

The rise of women entrepreneurs has become a significant global phenomenon, with women increasingly stepping into leadership roles and driving economic growth across various sectors. (Langowitz & Morgan, 2003). Despite these advancements, women entrepreneurs continue to face unique challenges that differentiate their experiences from those of their male counterparts (Rahim et al., 2017). One of the most significant issues confronting women entrepreneurs is the balancing act between professional responsibilities and personal life commitments commonly referred to as work-life balance (WLB). As the boundaries between work and personal life blur, maintaining equilibrium in both domains becomes critical not only for their well-being but also for the sustainability of their businesses (Agarwal & Lenka, 2015). The concept of work-life balance is multifaceted, encompassing the management of time, energy, and emotions between professional duties and personal commitments, such as family, health, and social relationships (Lockwood, 2003). For women entrepreneurs, the challenge of achieving WLB is compounded by traditional gender roles, societal expectations, and the disproportionate burden of household responsibilities. As women continue to occupy dual roles as business leaders and primary caregivers in many cultures, they often find themselves struggling to meet the demands of both realms. The intersection of these roles can create significant strain, leading to stress, burnout, and diminished personal and professional satisfaction (Pareek & Bagrecha, 2017).

In recent years, work-life balance has gained widespread attention in the academic and business communities due to its direct impact on individual well-being and organizational performance. Research indicates that the ability to achieve a healthy balance between work and life has a positive correlation with mental and physical health, job satisfaction, and overall quality of life (Delecta, 2011). For women entrepreneurs, this balance is particularly crucial, as their success often hinges on their ability to navigate the complexities of managing a business while meeting personal and family obligations. In addition, societal attitudes toward women in

leadership positions often impose heightened expectations on their performance both at home and at work, adding further pressure to achieve perfection in both domains (Krishna & Lakshmypriya, 2016).

Another important factor in an entrepreneur's journey is social support. It can be from the family, friends, colleagues, significant other, or entrepreneurial support network. Social support is a critical factor influencing psychological well-being, resilience, and quality of life across various populations. It encompasses emotional, informational, and instrumental resources provided by one's social network, including family, friends, and colleagues, which help individuals cope with stress and challenges (Schwarzer & Rieckmann, 2004). Research consistently highlights that strong social support is linked to reduced levels of stress, enhanced life satisfaction, and better mental health outcomes (Thoits, 2011). For instance, social support can mitigate the adverse effects of stressful life events by providing emotional reassurance or practical help, thereby promoting positive coping strategies (Uchino, 2004). Moreover, perceived support for the belief that one has a reliable support network is often as beneficial as actual support received, emphasizing the role of social perception in psychological well-being (Lakey & Orehek, 2011). Social support is especially relevant in dynamic life situations, such as career changes or family transitions, where it can buffer against potential mental health risks and facilitate adaptation (Taylor, 2011). This is particularly true for entrepreneurs, who face unique pressures and uncertainties so for entrepreneurs, social support plays a crucial role in sustaining motivation, overcoming challenges, and achieving business success. The entrepreneurial journey is often marked by high ambiguity, financial pressures, and personal risk, making social support a valuable resource for maintaining mental health and resilience (Patel & Thatcher, 2014). Research shows that entrepreneurs with robust social networks report higher levels of psychological well-being and are more likely to persevere during challenging phases of business development (Klyver et al., 2018). Support from family, friends, and mentors can alleviate some of the stress associated with entrepreneurship by providing emotional comfort and practical guidance (Semerci, 2016). Moreover, entrepreneurial support networks often facilitate access to resources such as funding and market knowledge, which are essential for business growth and innovation (Zimmer, 1986). However, the unique demands of entrepreneurship can affect men and women entrepreneurs differently. The strain in personal relationships makes the balance of work and social support critical to an entrepreneur's success and overall life satisfaction (Eddleston & Powell, 2012).

II. Review Of Literature

Women are increasingly venturing into entrepreneurship, driven by a combination of push and pull factors. Push factors, such as the need to supplement family income or job dissatisfaction compel many women to start their businesses. On the other hand, pull factors like the desire for economic independence, self-esteem, personal identity, and personal growth also significantly draw women towards entrepreneurial ventures. Regardless of the motivation, women entrepreneurs have emerged as substantial contributors to national economic growth, driving innovation, job creation, and social progress (Dawson & Henley, 2012). However, the entrepreneurial path also presents unique work-life balance challenges for both men and women. Work-life balance is a crucial aspect of the lives of both men and women yet it manifests differently due to varying social, cultural, and personal factors. While entrepreneurship offers flexibility and autonomy, it also brings intense demands and pressures, which can blur the boundaries between work and personal life. A healthy work-life balance is essential for maintaining mental and physical well-being, sustaining personal relationships, and ensuring professional success (Kashyap et al., 2016).

The gender wise research on work-life balance has garnered significant attention in recent years, particularly as societal norms and workplace dynamics evolve. Research indicates that while both genders face challenges in balancing professional and personal responsibilities, the nature and impact of these challenges often differ. Johnson et al. (2020) highlighted that burnout among US surgeons is notably high, especially among women, with work-life integration conflicts significantly contributing to career dissatisfaction. Their findings reveal that women report lower career satisfaction and a greater burden from personal life interruptions due to work, suggesting that gender roles still play a crucial role in shaping work-life experiences. Similarly, Pace & Sciotto (2021) further explored the relationship between career opportunities, work-life balance, and well-being perception among male and female respondents. Their multi-group analysis demonstrates that women experience a weaker connection between career opportunities and work-life balance compared to men. This disparity implies that while women may strive for career advancement, the associated stressors significantly impact their overall well-being, emphasizing the need for tailored support mechanisms that address these unique challenges. The post-pandemic landscape has also transformed work-life boundaries, particularly for female workers and entrepreneurs. Guo & Zhu (2023) examined how coworking spaces can facilitate improved work-life balance through flexible scheduling and location options. Their research underscores the importance of creating inclusive environments that cater to the needs of women, particularly considering the increasing number of working women and single parents. The establishment of such spaces not only promotes networking and community building but also addresses the specific challenges women face in managing their professional and personal lives. De Clercq

et al., (2023) investigated the mediating role of emotional exhaustion among women entrepreneurs, emphasizing the significance of family support in mitigating work interference with family life. Their findings indicate that supportive family relationships can alleviate the burden of work-related stress, particularly for women pursuing demanding entrepreneurial strategies. This suggests that fostering strong family ties can be a critical factor in enhancing work-life balance for women entrepreneurs, ultimately leading to better overall well-being.

For men entrepreneurs, work-life balance often involves managing the pressures of growing a business alongside personal commitments such as family, leisure, and health. Although societal norms tend to position men as primary breadwinners, they may not face the same expectations in terms of household responsibilities and caregiving, potentially giving them more flexibility in navigating their business commitments. In contrast, women entrepreneurs often experience unique challenges in maintaining work-life balance. Along with running a business, they frequently bear the bulk of domestic responsibilities, including childcare, eldercare, and household management. This dual burden can lead to heightened stress, time constraints, and a constant juggling of roles, which may affect their overall well-being and business outcomes (Mathew & Panchanatham, 2011). The traditional gender roles and societal expectations still play a significant role in shaping the experiences of women entrepreneurs, making it harder for them to compartmentalize work and personal life (Verma, 2019).

Research on work-life balance among entrepreneurs reveals gender differences in approaches and experiences. Women entrepreneurs tend to achieve work-family balance by creating synergies between work and family, while men rely more on family support at home (Powell & Eddleston, 2013). Women entrepreneurs in India face challenges such as role overload, dependent care issues, and lack of social support in maintaining work-life balance (Mathew & Panchanatham, 2011). However, studies also show that women entrepreneurs report higher work-family balance (52%) compared to female employees (37%), valuing job satisfaction and stress avoidance (Saiz-Álvarez & Coduras, 2019). Despite this, female entrepreneurs across various sectors still struggle to balance family and work life due to work pressures and competitive environments (Rai & Kiran, 2020). These findings highlight the complex nature of work-life balance and social support for entrepreneurs, particularly women, and underscore the need for targeted support and strategies to address these challenges.

Despite the growing body of literature on work-life balance (WLB) and social support, the distinct experiences of women and men entrepreneurs remain underexplored. Much existing research has primarily focused on corporate or traditional work settings, overlooking the unique challenges that entrepreneurs face. Women entrepreneurs often operate in flexible yet demanding environments where long hours, high commitment, and financial risk can intensify work-life imbalances. While entrepreneurship is sometimes viewed as a path to greater flexibility offering control over schedules and work environments, the pressures of running a business can counterbalance these benefits, creating a complex picture of work-life balance for entrepreneurial women. This nuanced duality highlights the need to understand how gender influences WLB among entrepreneurs.

This research paper aims to bridge this gap by comparing work-life balance in women and men entrepreneurs, and women non-entrepreneurs, examining the factors that affect their ability to manage both professional and personal responsibilities effectively. The study will explore the role of social support in entrepreneurs' lives, as it can serve as a critical resource for entrepreneurs facing the demands of their ventures. By investigating the barriers and supports influencing WLB, this research seeks to shed light on how social support interacts with gendered entrepreneurial experiences. Ultimately, the insights gained could inform policies and practices that empower both women and men entrepreneurs to thrive in their personal and professional lives.

III. Method

Objectives:

1. To compare work-life balance scores among men entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, and women non-entrepreneurs.
2. To compare levels of social support among men entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, and women non-entrepreneurs.
3. To examine the relationship between work-life balance and social support of entrepreneurs.

Hypotheses:

- H1: There will be no difference in the work-life balance scores of women entrepreneurs and women non-entrepreneurs and men entrepreneurs.
- H2: There will be similar levels of social support scores for women entrepreneurs and women non-entrepreneurs and men entrepreneurs.
- H3: There will be a positive correlation between the dimensions of work-life balance and the types of social support of entrepreneurs.

Research design: Comparative cross-sectional survey design.

Sample: The sample consisted of 176 women entrepreneurs, 170 non-entrepreneurs, and 161 men entrepreneurs from the semi-urban parts of Maharashtra. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample. Entrepreneurs were engaged in micro and small businesses All the participants were literate and had successfully run their businesses for more than 2 years. All the participants fell under the age group ranging from 25 to 55 years. Non-entrepreneurs were women with regular paying jobs in shops, factories, companies, offices, schools etc.

Tools:

Demographic data sheet- This sheet included basic information such as age, education, marital status, and annual income, it also included some questions regarding their businesses like number of years in business, inherited or owned, number of employees working, whether it falls under the category of micro, small or nano enterprises.

Work-life balance scale- It is developed by Dr. Smita Singh, Lucknow. It is a 24-item scale with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.908 and the reliability of subscales ranging from 0.968 to 0.798. The validated instrument comprises four dimensions operationalized as work spillover in personal life (WSPL), personal life spillover in work (PLSW), work/life behavioral enhancers (WLBE), and work/life behavioral constrainters (WLBC). The construct validity of the scale is provided using content, convergent, and discriminant validity (Singh, 2014).

Social Support Scale - Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS). It has three subscales, each addressing a different source of support, found to have strong factorial validity: (a) Family, (b) Friends, and (c) Significant Other. The MSPSS has good internal and test-retest reliability as well as moderate construct validity (Zimet et al.,1988).

Procedure:

Many NGOs who promote women's entrepreneurship in the state of Maharashtra were contacted and explained the need for the study. The respective organizations after consulting women entrepreneurs who satisfied the criteria and were willing to take part in the study were contacted. Data was gathered personally through survey forms, including informed consent and interviews, to learn more about their lived experience as entrepreneurs. Data from women non-entrepreneurs and men entrepreneurs was also collected through surveys personally. Statistical analyses were done on SPSS 23. Mean, SD, Pearson's Correlation, MANOVA, and Post hoc tests were conducted.

IV. Results

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics: Mean, SD of Social Support, Work-Life Balance

Total N (Women entrepreneurs =176, Women non-entrepreneurs = 170, Men entrepreneurs = 161)

	Type	Mean	Std. Deviation
Significant Other	Women entrepreneurs	5.63	1.629
	Women non- entrepreneurs	5.38	1.458
	Men entrepreneurs	5.30	1.579
	Total	5.44	1.561
Family	Women entrepreneurs	5.71	1.648
	Women non-entrepreneurs	5.52	1.592
	Men entrepreneurs	5.54	1.448
	Total	5.60	1.568
Friends	Women entrepreneurs	5.54	1.471
	Women non-entrepreneurs	5.44	1.357
	Men entrepreneurs	5.40	1.349
	Total	5.46	1.394
*WSPL	Women entrepreneurs	53.64	17.598
	Women non-entrepreneurs	52.19	17.472
	Men entrepreneurs	45.66	18.281
	Total	50.63	18.070
**PLSW	Women entrepreneurs	25.18	7.066
	Women non-entrepreneurs	23.77	7.588
	Men entrepreneurs	18.77	8.032
	Total	22.68	8.019
***WLBE	Women entrepreneurs	15.56	3.965
	Women non-entrepreneurs	13.48	4.655
	Men entrepreneurs	13.81	4.937
	Total	14.31	4.607
****WLBC	Women entrepreneurs	12.59	5.248
	Women non-entrepreneurs	10.96	5.142
	Men entrepreneurs	10.84	5.945
	Total	11.49	5.493

WSPL- work spillover in personal life, **PLSW- personal life spillover in work, ***WLBE- work/life behavioral enhancers, and *WLBC- work/life behavioral constrainers**

Table 1 shows the mean score for work-life balance among women entrepreneurs is higher in all the domains than women non-entrepreneurs and men entrepreneurs.

Also, women entrepreneurs showed slightly higher social support scores than men and women non-entrepreneurs, suggesting that social support dynamics may vary based on entrepreneurial status. These descriptive findings align with the research objectives to compare work-life balance and social support across groups. Further analysis is done to determine if these observed differences are statistically significant. To evaluate the significance of these differences, an inferential statistical test MANOVA was conducted.

Table 2 MANOVA for comparing Social Support and Work-life balance among the 3 groups

	Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.975	2826.536 ^b	7.000	497.000	<.001	.975
	Wilks' Lambda	.025	2826.536 ^b	7.000	497.000	<.001	.975
	Hotelling's Trace	39.810	2826.536 ^b	7.000	497.000	<.001	.975
	Roy's Largest Root	39.810	2826.536 ^b	7.000	497.000	<.001	.975
Type	Pillai's Trace	.188	7.389	14.000	996.000	<.001	.094
	Wilks' Lambda	.818	7.487 ^b	14.000	994.000	<.001	.095
	Hotelling's Trace	.214	7.586	14.000	992.000	<.001	.097
	Roy's Largest Root	.167	11.847 ^c	7.000	498.000	<.001	.143

Table 2 indicates the intercept values (Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace, and Roy's Largest Root) are all significant ($p < .001$) and a very high partial eta squared ($\eta^2 = .975$). This indicates that the model explains a large portion of the variance in the combined dependent variables.

Each multivariate test indicates a significant effect of Type on the combination of dependent variables (work-life balance and social support). The partial eta squared values range from **.094 to .143**, suggesting that **Type** explains about **9% to 14.3% of the variance** in the combined dependent variables, which indicates a small effect size.

Table 3 Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Significant other	10.407	2	5.204	2.144	.118	.008
Family	3.807	2	1.904	.773	.462	.003
Friends	1.657	2	.829	.425	.654	.002
Total Social Support	4.533	2	2.267	1.183	.307	.005
WSPL	5961.608	2	2980.804	9.434	<.001	.036
PLSW	3743.638	2	1871.819	32.776	<.001	.115
WLBE	430.647	2	215.324	10.527	<.001	.040
WLBC	328.342	2	164.171	5.539	.004	.022
Total Work Life Balance	28105.165	2	14052.58	20.305	<.001	.075

Table 3 clearly shows the non-significant effects on Social Support Dimensions. None of the social support variables (Significant Other, Family, Friends and Total social support) show statistically significant differences across the groups. This suggests that **social support is relatively consistent** across the types of groups, with very low partial eta-squared values indicating that the effect sizes are minimal.

Table 3 also shows significant effects on Work-Life Balance Dimensions. The work-life balance variables (WSPL, PLSW, WLBE, WLBC and total WLB) show significant differences across groups, with p-values less than .01 for each. The partial eta squared values range from .022 to .115, indicating small to medium effect sizes. Specifically, **PLSW** shows the largest effect size ($\eta^2=.115$), indicating a notable difference across the groups. Total Work-Life Balance also has a substantial effect ($\eta^2=.075$), suggesting that overall work-life balance differs significantly between groups.

In a **post hoc analysis** using Tukey's HSD and LSD tests, significant differences were observed among women entrepreneurs, women non-entrepreneurs, and men entrepreneurs across work-life satisfaction and balance measures. Women entrepreneurs reported significantly higher **work spillover in personal life** and **personal life spillover at work, work/life behavioral enhancers** and **work/life behavioral constrainers** than both men entrepreneurs and women non-entrepreneurs ($p < .001$). These results indicate substantial gender and occupational role differences in work-life experiences.

Table 4 Correlation between Social Support and Work-Life Balance Dimensions in Entrepreneurs

		SO	Family	Friends	WSPL	PLSW	WLBE	WLBC
Significant Other	Pearson's r	—						
	p-value	—						
Family	Pearson's r	0.846	—					
	p-value	< .001	—					
Friends	Pearson's r	0.763	0.711	—				
	p-value	< .001	< .001	—				
WSPL	Pearson's r	0.018	-0.007	-0.041	—			
	p-value	0.746	0.892	0.449	—			
PLSW	Pearson's r	0.17	0.124	0.051	0.644	—		
	p-value	0.002	0.022	0.349	< .001	—		
WLBE	Pearson's r	0.172	0.148	0.115	-0.112	0.02	—	
	p-value	0.002	0.006	0.035	0.041	0.721	—	
WLBC	Pearson's r	0.021	0.001	-0.018	0.376	0.38	-0.096	—
	p-value	0.7	0.983	0.736	< .001	< .001	0.079	—

Table 4 shows a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.846$, $p < .001$) between Significant Other and Family, indicating that individuals who receive high social support from significant others also tend to receive strong support from their family. A strong positive correlation ($r = 0.763$, $p < .001$) between Significant Other and Friends suggests that individuals with strong support from significant others also receive support from friends.

A moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.711$, $p < .001$) between Family and Friends, indicates a similar relationship between family support and support from friends. A high positive correlation ($r = 0.644$, $p < .001$) between WSPL and PLSW, suggests that work spillover in personal life is closely linked to personal life spillover at work. A weak to moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.17$, $p = 0.002$) between Significant Other and PLSW, indicates that support from significant others is related to personal life spillover at work. A weak positive correlation ($r = 0.124$, $p = 0.022$) between Family and PLSW, shows that family support has a small positive association with personal life spillover at work. A weak positive correlation ($r = 0.02$, $p = 0.721$) between PLSW and WLBE, which is not statistically significant, implies that personal life at work is not strongly related to work-life balance enhancers. A moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.376$, $p < .001$) between WSPL and WLBC, indicates that work spillover in personal life is related to work-life balance constraints. A moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.38$, $p < .001$) between PLSW and WLBC, suggests that personal life spillover at work is associated with work-life balance constraints.

V. Discussion

The findings of this study highlight important insights into the dynamics of work-life balance (WLB) and social support among men and women entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs. Contrary to expectations, no significant differences in levels of social support were found across the groups, suggesting that both entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs, regardless of gender, perceive similar levels of support from their social networks (Molino et al., 2018). Hence the hypothesis that all the groups receive similar social support is accepted. This could indicate that the general availability of support from family, friends, and the significant other is relatively stable and less influenced by occupational or gender differences. Such support might be rooted in close social and familial ties that provide a constant source of encouragement and assistance, regardless of an individual's career path. In another study, social support has a higher effect on job stress on women entrepreneurs than men (Semerci, 2016). Women entrepreneurs also seek support from social networks (Emami & Packard, 2023). Female entrepreneurs benefit from the positive influence of family-to-business enrichment and support on their entrepreneurial success, while there is no evidence suggesting that male entrepreneurs experience the same advantage from these connections (Powell & Eddleston, 2013).

In contrast, the results reveal a significant difference in work-life balance across the groups. Entrepreneurs reported greater challenges in managing work-life balance than non-entrepreneurs (Mathew & Panchanatham, 2011). This disparity may be attributed to the unique demands of entrepreneurship, which often involve long working hours, irregular schedules, and high levels of responsibility, blurring the lines between work

and personal life. Although entrepreneurship offers a degree of flexibility, the need to maintain business momentum and address continuous challenges likely outweighs the autonomy benefits, thus affecting the work-life balance of entrepreneurs more profoundly than that of non-entrepreneurs. Besides, social expectations and gender roles may contribute to different work life balance experiences for women, particularly in cultures where women bear a disproportionate share of family responsibilities (Rehman & Azam Roomi, 2012; Krishna & Lakshmypriya, 2016; Pareek & Bagrecha, 2017).

So, the hypothesis is rejected as there is significant difference in all the three groups in work life balance scores. Women entrepreneurs experience more spillover between work and personal life, show higher levels of work-life enhancers and constrainers. This suggests that women have less defined boundaries between work and personal life and better scores on work/life behavioral enhancers shows that the problem-solving approach used at work is effective in resolving problems at home, and vice versa as women use planning, organising as effective strategies for better work life balance and there can be positive spillover (Powell & Greenhaus, 2010; Rehman & Azam Roomi, 2012). Women entrepreneurs also showed high scores on work/life behavioral constrainers such as behavioural response to interpersonal problems, behavioural effectiveness and inability to behave in the same manner at home as well as workplace (Uddin & Chowdhury, 2015).

Some previous studies have shown that women often experience a greater need for work-life balance due to their traditional roles and responsibilities within the family, which frequently include caregiving and household management in addition to their professional duties. Research suggests that women, particularly those with children, are more likely to face the dual demands of work and family, leading to increased stress and role conflict compared to men (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This compounded pressure makes achieving a healthy work-life balance essential for women's mental and physical well-being, as well as for their ability to perform effectively in both personal and professional spheres. A well-balanced work-life dynamic has been shown to reduce burnout, enhance job satisfaction, and improve the overall quality of life for women, highlighting its importance not only for individual health but also for sustained career success (Burke & Greenglass, 2001).

The study also found a moderate positive correlation between certain aspects of social support and work-life balance, suggesting that social support plays a critical role in mitigating work life balance challenges. Specifically, support from family and significant others was positively correlated with work life balance, indicating that individuals who perceive high levels of social support experience a more favorable balance between work and personal life. This finding aligns with previous research that highlights the buffering effect of social support, where emotional and instrumental assistance helps individuals manage stress and time demands more effectively (Uddin & Chowdhury, 2015). Also, the moderate correlation found in other areas of work life balance implies that while social support contributes positively to balancing work and life responsibilities, it may not fully offset the structural and psychological pressures faced by entrepreneurs. Studies have shown the positive role of family support in work-life balance and well-being of entrepreneurs (Leung et al., 2020).

VI. Conclusion

This study offers valuable insights into the dynamics of work-life balance and social support among men and women entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs. Contrary to the expectations, the levels of social support did not significantly differ across the groups, suggesting that both entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs, regardless of gender, receive similar support from their social networks. This finding suggests that the availability of social support may be influenced more by close personal and familial relationships than by occupational or gender differences. However, significant differences were observed in work-life balance, with both men and women entrepreneurs experiencing greater challenges than non-entrepreneurs. This is likely due to the demanding nature of entrepreneurship, which often involves extended hours and irregular schedules, blurring the lines between work and personal life. The study also highlights that women entrepreneurs experience more spillover between work and personal life, and also demonstrate higher levels of work-life behavioral enhancers and constrainers.

The positive correlation between social support and work life balance indicates that support from family and significant others can alleviate work-life balance challenges, particularly for entrepreneurs. This underscores the role of social support in helping individuals navigate the demands of work and personal life, a finding aligned with previous research that highlights the buffering effects of social and familial networks. For policymakers and organizational leaders, these results suggest that initiatives to promote social support such as networking opportunities, mentorship programs, and flexible policies may be beneficial for women entrepreneurs. Considering the significant impact of work-life balance on mental well-being and productivity, tailored interventions to address work life balance challenges, particularly for entrepreneurs, could enhance both individual and business outcomes.

VII. Limitations And Future Directions

A longitudinal approach would provide more robust insights into changes in work life balance and social support over time. The use of self-reported measures may introduce bias, employing multiple data sources or

observational methods, and adding qualitative methods, such as interviews or case studies could offer more comprehensive findings. Future studies should aim to include interventions to improve work-life balance like training in time management, boundary-setting, or stress reduction for entrepreneurs. Studying factors like personality traits, resilience, and coping strategies as moderators of work-life balance. Studying variations in work-life balance affect psychological well-being, stress, and mental health across these groups.

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