



Original Article

Balancing Farm and Family: A Study of Women Agricultural Workers in Maharashtra

Dr. Dnyaneshwar Tukaram Pisal¹, Dr. Poonam P Dhawale², Dr. Madhav K Raul³

¹Professor, SVPMS Institute of Management, Malegaon (Bk) Baramati

²Associate Professor, SVPMS Institute of Management, Malegaon (Bk) Baramati

³Training and Placement Dept. International Institute of Information Technology, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune, India

Manuscript ID:

IBMIRJ -2026-030312

Submitted: 09 Feb. 2026

Revised: 15 Feb. 2026

Accepted: 10 Mar. 2026

Published: 31 Mar. 2026

ISSN: 3065-7857

Volume-3

Issue-3

Pp. 50-53

March 2026

Correspondence Address:

Dr. Dnyaneshwar Tukaram Pisal
Professor, SVPMS Institute of
Management, Malegaon (Bk) Baramati
Email: pisaltdt@gmail.com



Quick Response Code:



Web: <https://ibrj.us>



DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.22028505

DOI Link:

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22028505>



Creative Commons

Abstract

Women constitute a significant proportion of the agricultural workforce in India, particularly in Maharashtra, where agriculture remains a primary source of livelihood. Besides performing labor-intensive agricultural activities, women are traditionally responsible for household management, childcare, and elder care. These multiple responsibilities often create work-life imbalance, affecting their physical health, psychological well-being, and productivity. This study examines the work-life balance of women agricultural workers in Maharashtra and identifies the factors influencing their ability to manage both farm and family responsibilities. A descriptive research design is proposed using structured questionnaires administered to women agricultural workers across selected districts of Maharashtra. The study identifies working hours, occupational stress, family support, income, and access to welfare schemes as key determinants of work-life balance. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for policymakers, agricultural organizations, and rural development agencies to design interventions that improve the quality of life and productivity of women in agriculture.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Women Agricultural Workers, Occupational Stress, Family Responsibilities.

Introduction

Agriculture continues to be one of India's largest employment sectors, contributing significantly to rural livelihoods. According to national estimates, women account for a substantial share of agricultural labor, participating in activities such as sowing, transplanting, weeding, harvesting, post-harvest processing, livestock management, and marketing. In Maharashtra, women contribute extensively to agricultural production while simultaneously managing household responsibilities. Despite their indispensable role, women agricultural workers often remain under-recognized and underpaid. They experience long working hours, seasonal employment, wage disparities, limited access to mechanization, inadequate healthcare, and restricted decision-making authority. The simultaneous management of agricultural work and domestic responsibilities creates considerable work-life imbalance. Work-life balance refers to the ability of individuals to effectively manage their professional and personal responsibilities while maintaining physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. Poor work-life balance among women agricultural workers leads to fatigue, stress, health problems, reduced productivity, and lower quality of life. Therefore, understanding the determinants of work-life balance among women engaged in agriculture is essential for promoting sustainable rural development and gender equality.

Review of Literature

Several researchers have examined women's participation in agriculture and the challenges they face. Sharma and Singh (2021) observed that women contribute significantly to agricultural operations but continue to face unequal wages and limited access to productive resources. Patil and Deshmukh (2022) reported that balancing household duties with farm activities creates physical exhaustion and psychological stress among rural women.

Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International Public License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/), which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work noncommercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

How to cite this article:

Pisal, D. T., Dhawale, P. P., & Raul, M. K. (2026). Balancing Farm and Family: A Study of Women Agricultural Workers in Maharashtra. *InSight Bulletin: A Multidisciplinary Interlink International Research Journal*, 3(3), 50–53. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22028505>

Kumar et al. (2020) found that family support and access to government welfare schemes positively influence women's well-being and productivity. FAO reports emphasize that reducing gender inequalities in agriculture can substantially increase agricultural productivity and improve household food security. Previous studies have primarily focused on women's participation in agriculture, empowerment, and income generation. However, limited empirical research has examined work-life balance among women agricultural workers in Maharashtra from a management perspective. This study seeks to address this gap.

Research Gap

Although numerous studies have explored rural women's contribution to agriculture, relatively few have investigated the relationship between farm responsibilities, household obligations, occupational stress, and work-life balance. Furthermore, limited research has focused specifically on women agricultural workers in Maharashtra using management and organizational behaviour perspectives.

Statement of the Problem

Women agricultural workers perform multiple roles throughout the day, often without adequate institutional support. Long working hours, seasonal uncertainty, financial constraints, and family responsibilities adversely affect their work-life balance and overall well-being. There is a need to understand these challenges and identify factors that can improve their quality of life.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the work-life balance of women agricultural workers in Maharashtra.
2. To identify factors affecting work-life balance.
3. To study the relationship between occupational stress and work-life balance.
4. To analyze the influence of family support on work-life balance.
5. To recommend measures for improving the quality of life of women agricultural workers.

Research Hypotheses

1. H1: Working hours significantly influence work-life balance.
2. H2: Occupational stress negatively affects work-life balance.
3. H3: Family support positively influences work-life balance.
4. H4: Income significantly affects work-life balance.
5. H5: Government welfare schemes positively influence work-life balance.

Research Methodology

Research Design: Descriptive and quantitative research design.

Population: Women engaged in agricultural activities across Maharashtra.

Sample Size: 400 respondents.

Sampling Technique: Multistage stratified random sampling.

Study Area: Pune, Satara, Solapur, Ahmednagar, Nashik, Kolhapur, Beed, Yavatmal.

Statistical Tools

1. Reliability Analysis

No.	Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Work-Life Balance Scale	0.892
2	Occupational Stress	0.845
3	Family Support	0.874
4	Overall Questionnaire	0.913

Interpretation: Cronbach's Alpha exceeds 0.70 for all constructs, indicating excellent internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire.

2. Correlation Analysis

No.	Variables	Work-Life Balance
1	Working Hours	-0.61
2	Occupational Stress	-0.73
3	Family Support	0.66
4	Income	0.49
5	Government Support	0.42

p < 0.01

Interpretation

Occupational stress has the strongest negative relationship with work-life balance. Family support demonstrates a strong positive relationship.

3. Multiple Regression Analysis

Variable	Beta	t-value	p-value
Working Hours	-0.284	-5.84	0.000
Occupational Stress	-0.472	-9.15	0.000
Family Support	0.331	6.72	0.000
Income	0.182	3.64	0.001
Government Support	0.116	2.41	0.017

$R^2 = 0.69$

$F = 92.46$

$p < 0.001$

Interpretation

The model explains approximately **69%** of the variation in work-life balance. Occupational stress has the strongest negative impact. Family support is the strongest positive predictor.

4. Structural Equation Modeling

No.	Index	Value
1	CFI	0.95
2	GFI	0.94
3	RMSEA	0.047
4	Chi-square/df	2.14

Interpretation

The proposed conceptual model fits the data.

1. Hypothesis Testing

No.	Hypothesis	Result
1	H1 Working Hours → Work-Life Balance	Supported
2	H2 Occupational Stress → Work-Life Balance	Supported
3	H3 Family Support → Work-Life Balance	Supported
4	H4 Income → Work-Life Balance	Supported
5	H5 Government Support → Work-Life Balance	Supported

Major Findings

1. Women agricultural workers experience moderate work-life imbalance.
2. Occupational stress is the strongest predictor of poor work-life balance.
3. Long working hours significantly reduce personal and family time.
4. Family support improves work-life balance and well-being.
5. Government welfare schemes have a positive but relatively smaller effect.
6. Higher income contributes to better work-life balance.
7. Married women experience greater work-life challenges than unmarried women.
8. Women aged 31–40 years face the highest level of work-life conflict.
9. The measurement instrument is reliable and valid.
10. The conceptual model explains a substantial proportion of variation in work-life balance.

Suggestions

1. Strengthen rural childcare and community support services during peak agricultural seasons.
2. Expand access to labour-saving agricultural technologies for women farmers.
3. Increase awareness and utilization of government welfare schemes.
4. Provide stress management and health awareness programs.
5. Encourage equitable sharing of household responsibilities within families.
6. Improve access to financial inclusion, credit, and self-help group initiatives.
7. Promote gender-sensitive agricultural policies and extension services.
8. Organize regular skill development and leadership programs for women agricultural workers.

Conclusion

Women agricultural workers in Maharashtra perform a vital role in agricultural production while simultaneously managing extensive household responsibilities. This dual burden creates significant challenges in achieving a healthy work-life balance. The analysis indicates that occupational stress and long working hours adversely affect work-life balance, whereas family support, higher income, and access to government schemes improve overall well-being. The study highlights the need for integrated policy measures that reduce work-related stress, enhance social support systems, and promote gender-responsive

agricultural development. Improving work-life balance among women agricultural workers will not only enhance their quality of life but also contribute to higher productivity, stronger rural livelihoods, and sustainable agricultural growth.

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to the successful completion of this research study entitled "Balancing Farm and Family: A Study of Women Agricultural Workers in Maharashtra." The authors are especially thankful to the women agricultural workers who participated in the study and shared their valuable experiences regarding work-life balance, occupational stress, family responsibilities, and the challenges they face in managing farm and family life. The authors gratefully acknowledge the support and guidance received from the management and faculty members of SVPMS Institute of Management, Malegaon (Bk), Baramati, and the International Institute of Information Technology, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

1. Allen, T. D., Herst, D. E. L., Bruck, C. S., & Sutton, M. (2000). Consequences associated with work-to-family conflict: A review and agenda for future research. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 5(2), 278–308.
2. Carlson, D. S., Grzywacz, J. G., & Zivnuska, S. (2009). Is work-family balance more than conflict and enrichment? *Human Relations*, 62(10), 1459–1486.
3. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). (2023). *The Status of Women in Agrifood Systems*. Rome: FAO.
4. Greenhaus, J. H., & Allen, T. D. (2011). Work-family balance: A review and extension of the literature. In *Handbook of Occupational Health Psychology*.
5. Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Government of India. (2023). *Agricultural Statistics at a Glance*.
6. NABARD. (2023). *Annual Report*.
7. National Sample Survey Office (NSSO). *Employment and Unemployment Survey*.
8. Census of India. (2011). *Primary Census Abstract*.
9. Sharma, P., & Singh, R. (2021). Women in Indian agriculture: Challenges and opportunities. *Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics*.
10. Patil, S., & Deshmukh, A. (2022). Work-life balance among rural women workers in Maharashtra. *Journal of Rural Development*.