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### Research Article



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## Effects of Pandemic: Personal and Professional Challenges for Working Women

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### Abstract

**Purpose of the study:** The paper explores the pertinent challenges faced by working women on personal and professional domains under the lockdown implemented during Covid-19 pandemic. It identifies the sources of stress which have pressurized women under multiple responsibilities while staying at home.

**Methodology:** A structured questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale is used to collect data online from 271 employed women working from home. Data analysis is done through SPSS version 20. Descriptive statistics explore the demographic profile of the respondents whereas Cronbach's alpha and factor analysis measure reliability and identify significant factors of challenges respectively.

**Findings:** A seven factors structure is derived which provides prolific quantitative and qualitative information centralizing around the theme.

**Implications:** The article is helpful for organizations and HR practitioners to design policies which enhance their work life balance among their employees as well as to understand the cluster of problems women have while trying to balance their multiple roles

**Limitations and Future direction:** There is a potential for a future study through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) conducted on independent samples to establish the stability of the factor structure. Moreover, a comparative study can be done to understand challenges across different sectors, or a gender-wise comparison can be made.

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## 1. Introduction

Covid-19 has stalled the lives of humankind and has had a paramount impact on individuals and families. It has hard hit industries all over the world and the global economy is potentially moving towards a massive recession where the magnitude of losses of the effected industries and sectors is completely different from that of previous recessions (Hupka & Petrongolo, 2020). The pandemic has caused a major hindrance in people's work arrangements because in many places lockdowns and curfews had to be placed (Zhang et al. 2020). Because of strict social distancing practices and the closure of many businesses being non-essential, however, it is still too soon to investigate the impact of these measures on people's lives and income generating activities (Chanona et. al. 2020). It was towards the end of March 2020 when the Bangladeshi government started to implement strict measures to contain the novel Corona virus. These included lockdowns, closing educational institutions, public and private offices, banning religious and otherwise public congregations, closing public transport facilities and restricting movements unless urgent. Very recent research show that though these steps in addition to playing their part in the initial management of the epidemic in the country have also swayed on male and female labor market participation (Barbieri, Basso and Scicchitano, 2020) and in gender inequality.

It is interesting to study the impact of these measures in terms of gender standpoint in the Bangladeshi context as the society is highly patriarchal, and therefore, there are gender gaps not only in the labor market, but domestic gaps exist as well. Studies conducted in United Kingdom and Italy depict that after the lockdown measures men have contributed more to childcare and home schooling. However, they have not contributed substantially towards homemaking (Boca et al., 2020; Sevilla and Smith, 2020). With the closure of schools or their transition to totally online formats, retail enterprises either shut down or significantly decreased their operating hours, and restaurants either ceased operations or shifted exclusively to takeaway and delivery services, several workplaces implemented remote work arrangements. Remote work possesses distinct advantages. However, if the home chores remain female dominated, it will only increase to an unbalance in the roles of men and women.

As gender participation across industries is not homogeneous, it implies a significantly different impact on the employment of both men and women because of Covid-19. Historically and traditionally, child rearing and home making have primarily been the responsibilities of women. Thus, the lockdowns and the work from home arrangements have added authenticity to this argument as professional women have been found to have a different impact from that of professional men in terms of increased personal and professional challenges. There have been plenty of research conducted to investigate the contribution of men and women at home making. Though these researchers conducted their studies before Covid-19 surfaced, the findings might not be very different from that of today, if not less. Aguiar, Hurst and Karabarbounis (2013) have mentioned in their research that even in Great Recession, it was mainly women who had used their free hours because of the market conditions and unemployment on housekeeping and childcare.

Women are always multitasking more, and it seems that the pandemic has not changed the traditional domestic gender gap equation. It is forecasted that the pandemic will have an adverse impact on women's professional horizons (Alon et al., 2020). Not only that, but lockdown has also resulted in a shocking increase in domestic violence cases all over the world. Taub (2020) suggests that this trend is on the increase mainly because the closure of industries has forced couples and families to socially isolate themselves in one place. Additionally, Cluver et al. (2020) explains that keeping children busy at home has proved to be a difficult task especially when the parents are working from home and must attend to their professional responsibilities from home. It becomes a more daunting experience when the end of this situation is nowhere in sight. Topping (2020) indicated that the pandemic may significantly impact gender equality, potentially reversing progress for women by decades. Considering these factors collectively indicates that the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to exert a significantly adverse impact on women and their employment prospects. (China Centre for Disease Control, 2020). As a very few studies have been done on both the personal and professional challenges of working women in Bangladesh during Covid-19, this study pursues the following objectives: (a) Identify the personal and professional challenges encountered by Bangladeshi working women during the pandemic of COVID-19.

(b) Assess the extent of the challenges as a stressor for the female professionals. The paper is organized as follows: the next section describes the literature review, followed by methodology, data analysis, main analysis and results, and the last section finally concludes.

## 2. Literature review

According to the World Bank and WHO's prediction, COVID-19, a contagious viral disease has become a highly significant threat to developing countries like Bangladesh. On March 8, 2020, the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) announced the initial three cases of coronavirus in Bangladesh, which has since recorded a total of 246,674 COVID-19 positive cases and 3,267 fatalities as of August 6, 2020. When community transmission was apparent in Bangladesh the number of cases continued to grow, and consequent guidance concentrated on encouraging majority of workers to work from home.

### 2.1 Challenges of Women

Women experience lower earnings, reduced savings, less job security, and greater work-family demands. The evidence indicates that women's lives have grown increasingly difficult, especially with achieving a suitable work-life balance since the onset of COVID-19 (Zhang et al. 2020). In a qualitative study, Taghizadeh et al. (2021) determined that certain men in traditional cultures anticipate perpetual subservience from women, a phenomenon commonly referred to as hegemonic masculinity. Even while the women work in ready-made garment (RMG) industry and make a substantial contribution to the economy of the country, a considerable number of them are not only subjected to physical and verbal abuse, but they also require permission from a member of their family to leave their home (Shabnaz & Shajahan, 2017). They continue to be victims of violence and assaults (Shajahan, 2017).

Alongside job-related stress, the substantial burden of familial responsibilities and the deficiency of personal competencies are regarded as additional sources of conflict. Research has revealed that entrenched socio-cultural traditions, gender stereotypes, significant pressure to juggle multiple work-family obligations, and adverse perceptions of working women by both genders constitute primary obstacles faced by women in reconciling their professional and familial responsibilities. These issues result in the eventual convergence of work and family roles (Uddin 2021). In contrast to most males, women assume numerous roles (e.g., household duties and caregiving responsibilities) within the home, which impacts their capacity to attain work-life balance (Grünberg & Matei, 2020).

Tasnim et al. (2017) identified that in Bangladesh, prolonged working hours, strenuous labor, excessive workloads, childcare obligations, workplace discrimination and bias, inadequate supervision, authoritarian management styles, and insufficient family support are the fundamental factors contributing to the disruption of work-life balance among working women. The involvement of women in augmented domestic responsibilities typically diminishes their productivity (Power 2020). Adisa et al. (2019a) assert that robust patriarchal norms and predispositions incite work-life conflict (WLC) for women, potentially leading to diminished productivity and efficacy in both professional and domestic spheres.

The obstacles to women's job advancement are many. Despite the global increase in women's participation in the workforce and their advancement to mid-level managerial roles (Bazazo et al., 2017), achieving higher leadership positions continues to be impeded by factors including familial obligations, gender stereotypes, and male-dominated corporate cultures (Freund & Hernandez-Maskivker, 2021). It can be inferred that women are more likely to encounter heightened stress and disruption in work-family dynamics (Craig and Churchill 2020). Additionally, it has been discovered that women employ a few coping mechanisms for their stress such as doing housework, finishing homework, keeping oneself clean, concentrating on relaxation techniques, and learning new abilities, smashing objects, yelling, and sobbing, in contrast to men (Shajahan et al., 2020). Working

women frequently balance several duties and problems due to their various roles (Akinsanya, 2012). Organizational stress may stem from inadequate income, job insecurity, relocation, and limited opportunities for growth and progress, potentially resulting in adverse health effects such as anxiety, bodily discomfort, fatigue, rage, frustration, and illness (Das, 2016). Studies demonstrate that women struggle to attain work-life balance mainly owing to the professional obstacles they confront daily (Tasnim et al. 2017). Working women have encountered challenges in separating from their work obligations upon returning home, negatively impacting their interactions with their children (Rendon, 2016). Additional research highlights the difficulties encountered by these women, arising from familial responsibilities, legal inequities, restricted access to credit, and societal views on gender roles and norms (e.g., Ghaderi et al., 2023).

Research indicates that children and dependents typically seek assistance and care from their mums, which ultimately necessitates mothers to divide their time (Collins et al. 2020). Childcare continues to hinder women's professions; hence this service is strongly advocated (Gokulsing and Tandrayen Ragoobur, 2014). Research, in conjunction with the discovery of issues such as income inequities, instability, stress, gender discrimination, and insufficient family support, has uncovered a new challenge referred to as "hesitation." This matter is considered the foremost impediment faced by employed women (Bavya and Raghunandan, 2018). Salam (2016) determined that 30% of employed women face stereotyped barriers, whilst 25% confront issues pertaining to childcare. They faced challenges in balancing their professional and home life, along with issues such as sexual harassment, gender discrimination, and transportation-related barriers.

## 2.2 Challenges of Working from home

The COVID-19 epidemic exacerbated pre-existing gender norms, as numerous women faced increased domestic obligations in conjunction with their professional duties, encompassing childcare, remote schooling, and household chores (Craig and Churchill 2021). Some benefits of working from home have been observed by studies. The beneficial impact appears to stem from the allocation of quality time to non-work obligations, enhanced savings, job flexibility, and health and safety considerations. Conversely, spillover concerns, technical challenges, job intensification, and diversions associated with remote work were precipitated by spillover issues (Kooli, 2023). Choudhury et al. (2021) discovered a 4% enhancement in productivity among U.S. patent office personnel during the pandemic. Mehdi and Morissette (2021) similarly showed that 90% of Canadian workers exhibited equivalent or enhanced productivity while working from home. Barrero et al. (2020) reported that remote work during COVID-19 resulted in a savings of over 9 billion hours of commute time in the U.S., with one-third of this time allocated to job duties and two-thirds to childcare, leisure, and secondary employment. Kahn (2022) posited that the ability to work from a preferred place can enhance both physical and mental well-being. A study by Daud et al. (2021) done in Malaysia emphasized the health advantages of working from home, indicating reduced stress levels and an overall improvement in employee well-being during the epidemic. Certain research has indicated that remote work may promote a more equal allocation of family responsibilities. The study by Augustine et al. (2024) presented indicative evidence that working from home (WFH) correlated with increased active caregiving time for both mothers and fathers, hence contesting traditional gendered labor divisions. Carlson and Petts, (2022) assert that the gendered division of labor is deeply entrenched in enduring cultural systems that remote work may not readily alter. On the contrary to the benefits, the Boundary theory proposes that the changes in physical, temporal, and psychological boundaries associated with teleworking introduce distinct obstacles of absent telecommuting in conventional work environments (Greer & Payne, 2014). Greer and Payne (2014) highlighted supervisors' perspectives on the obstacles faced by teleworkers, which include insufficient face-to-face contact, work interdependency, supervisory issues, the impact of non-teleworkers, home distractions, and resource deficiencies. In the age of social networking and sophisticated communication technologies, the drawbacks of remote work for young individuals are diverse, encompassing difficulties in differentiating personal from professional obligations, social isolation, and heightened

requirements for organizational abilities. Research indicated that teleworking laws instituted during the pandemic pose risks of alienating women from professional employment, undermining their labor conditions, and reinforcing their positions as conventional homemakers. (Coban 2022).

The study by Shockley et al. (2021) indicated that, despite the flexibility of working from home, women assumed greater, unanticipated, and continuous caregiving tasks while managing concurrent professional duties. Chauhan (2022) contended that work-from-home arrangements reinforced gender roles, with women assuming increased family responsibilities in conjunction with professional obligations, while males were less prone to face comparable demands. The pandemic impacted all economic sectors, altering professional life and employment dynamics, while also disturbing unpaid reproductive labor at home (Bahn et al., 2020; Blundell et al., 2020; Garcia, 2021; Qian & Hu, 2021). Dotsikas et al. (2023) assert that evidence demonstrates a decline in mental health due to the pandemic, particularly among women. This gender disparity may be attributed to the unique experiences of women during the epidemic, encompassing the weight of unpaid household labor, alterations in economic engagement, and feelings of isolation.

A study by Alon et al. (2020) has illustrated the hurdles and difficulties faced by working women in achieving work-life balance, as the pandemic appears to have intensified conventional gender stereotypes and inequities within families and society. Ibarra et al. (2020) assert that remote work predominantly benefits men (with or without children) and women without children, as they possess enhanced control over their schedules and can more readily prioritize their responsibilities. Another problem associated with remote employment for women, particularly mothers or carers, is the diminished efficacy and communication compared to in-person interactions in a real office setting. It diminishes workplace rapport (Ibarra et al., 2020) and interpersonal connectedness. Ultimately, it is crucial to recognize that remote work does not inherently equate to professional success. In certain instances, it may lead to delayed career advancement and stagnation, despite the person ostensibly experiencing a degree of job flexibility (Kooli, 2023). The study through literature makes it evident of significant challenges of women and their overall physical and mental impact. So far studies have been either focused on identifying challenges or identifying the impact of these challenges. Studies in this area have not focused on the challenges because of this new phenomenon of working from home. It is evident that now more than ever women face extreme stress owing to lack of work life balance under the pandemic situation, hence the research gap indicates the significance of undertaking this study.

### **3. Materials and Methods**

The research paper was a cross-sectional study which was carried out from May 13 to June 06, 2021, in Bangladesh. Self-explanatory questionnaire was distributed online using snowball sampling technique. To ensure representation researchers used their diverse network to distribute the questionnaire online. As the population during covid19 was difficult to reach, the sampling technique was used. It is also acknowledged that that the women in the sample are skewed towards higher education as they are more likely to have access to an online survey.

The survey instrument was developed after conducting focus group discussion, well thought out interviews with working women, listening to subject related podcasts and going through extensive literature. The above-mentioned methods helped the researchers in generating a pool of 89 initial statements. These were then reviewed not only by the researchers, but also by a group of female professionals to ensure content validity. This review backed by the feedback resulted in a list of 50 closed ended statements which were used to assess the nature and extent of the personal and professional challenges female professionals were handling while working from home during Covid-19. The final questionnaire had both demographic questions and close ended statements. The socio demographic variables included age, education, occupation, marital status, family type, number of children if any, number of people in the household and total number of years of working experience.

The respondents for this survey were professional females who were working from home. Since some of the questions could be sensitive, the instrument was kept anonymous. The statements were close ended and the response against each statement indicated the level of the respondent's agreement to it. Here it is necessary to remember that personal and professional challenges which arise due to working from home might be totally different during the time of a pandemic because of several reasons; change of mindset and underlying variables, stress and a massive impact on the livelihoods of people. This was why the authors decided to develop an instrument for this study instead of incorporating already existing validated scales. The link of the survey was sent to the initial participants who were personally known to the authors via emails, various messengers and other social media. Additionally, these respondents were requested to share the survey link amongst their own networks. The study generated 287 filled up questionnaires, out of which 16 were deemed unusable owing to inadequate information in them. Thus, data cleaning began with 271 responses and after further eliminating 22 responses which were outliers; the final count was reduced to 249 filled up questionnaires. SPSS version 21 was used for data entry and analysis. To examine the demographic profile of the respondents, descriptive statistics were used. In addition to that, Cronbach's alpha was used to measure reliability and Exploratory Factor analysis (EFA) to identify significant factors respectively.

## 4. Results and Discussions

### 4.1 Demographic Profile

From the demographic profile in Table 4.1 it has been viewed that majority of the respondents were in the age group of 31-35 years (58%), married with kids (40.7%), and working as Mid-level employee (58.5%) with post graduate degree (58.5%). By looking into their work experience it can be summarized that almost an equal number of respondents had (31.1%) 0-3 years and (30%) 4-7 years of job experience. It was also observed that a significant number (42.6%) of the respondents stayed with 3-4 members.

**Table 4.1 Demographic profile of respondents**

Age		Working experience		Family Size	
>25	14.4%	0-3	31.1%	1-2	14.1%
26-30	37.4%	4-7	30.0%	3-4	42.6%
31-35	58.0%	8-11	15.2%	5-6	31.1%
36-40	17.4%	12-15	12.6%	6+	12.2%
40+	9.3%	15+	11.1%		
Marital Status		Educational qualification		Job Hierarchy	
Single	34.4%	Below graduation	2.2%	Entry level	25.2%
Married without kids	21.5%	Graduation	34.8%	Mid- level	58.5%
Married with kids	40.7%	Post-graduation	58.5%	Top level	16.3%
Single mother	3.3%	M-Phil and above	4.4%		

### 4.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) done on 249 sample data that considered adequate according to Comrey & Lee, (2013). The Kaiser Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy index was .932 and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant,  $p < .0001$ , indicating that the sample and correlation matrix were appropriate for the analysis (Malhotra, 2020). The personal and professional challenges for women who are working consisted of fifty items after going through literature, professional podcasts and conducting focus group studies. To identify factors Principal Components Analysis (PCA) used. Eigenvalues of 1.0 or greater, factor loadings of .50 or greater and simple structure (Comrey & Lee, 2013) were the basis on which factor solutions were determined. Utilizing the Kaiser rule, seven factors with eigenvalues of 1.0 or greater identified. Varimax orthogonal rotation

conducted during the analysis and produced the clearest factor structure. Due to low factor loadings or dual-loading, sixteen items eliminated. These procedures resulted in a 34-item instrument that accounted for 71.47% of the variance.

The Rotated Component Matrix, which includes the component loading and variance explained, is shown in Table 4.2. The first factor consisted of fourteen items, accounted for 43.40% of the variance, and labelled Personal Disadvantage. The first factor contained items that measure the personal disadvantages women are facing due to longer working hours, work pressure, time management, and the impact of current situation on mental health, positivity, patience, and healthy habits. The second factor consisted of four items, accounted for 6.97% of the variance, and characterized as Decline in Team dynamics.

**Table 4.2 Rotated Component Matrix**

	Factor loading	Communality	Eigenvalue	Explained Variance
<b>Personal Disadvantage</b>			14.75	43.40%
Harder to take breaks while working from home.	.856	0.826		
Difficult to concentrate on healthy habits.	.816	0.805		
Lack of concentration in doing pleasurable things in free time due to work pressure.	.784	0.809		
Not getting enough time to sleep for longer hours.	.782	0.753		
Burning out in trying to accomplish work tasks.	.714	0.743		
Longer working hours due to work from home	.689	0.670		
Checking work emails even at odd hours	.658	0.757		
Mental health is suffering because of current circumstance	.640	0.771		
Difficult to stay positive.	.625	0.721		
Personal and professional lives blurred due to work from home	.623	0.675		
Exhausted by the frequency of the online meetings and video conferences.	.612	0.690		
Ability to remain patient and be tolerant has gone down.	.555	0.706		
Employer is taking me for granted and giving extra work.	.554	0.615		
Feel guilty of being home and not participating in the home chores.	.521	0.604		
<b>Decline in Team dynamics</b>			2.370	6.97%
Feeling left out from team.	.788	0.753		
Unable to communicate effectively with colleagues via the online medium.	.776	0.766		
Losing important networking opportunities.	.723	0.730		
Unsure of the performance standards for unfamiliar environment.	.567	0.622		
<b>Manager's apathetic attitude</b>			1.99	5.88%
Manager judgment regarding the ability to balance personal and professional lives.	.782	0.744		
Managers expectation of being online all the time.	.724	0.723		
Manager doubt regarding the efficiency due to lack of physical monitoring.	.700	0.752		
Strict deadlines set by Manager	.620	0.707		
<b>Manager's empathy</b>			1.667	4.90%
Manager shares the current news /updates with the employee /team.	.866	0.817		
Manager is empathetic to employees/team	.858	0.786		

Manager understands the unpredictability of this situation and impracticality of operating the business at the same level.	.792	0.677		
<b>Social capital</b>			1.40	4.12%
Feeling not to complain about the situation to anyone.	.705	0.727		
Fear of forgetting social skills by the time this pandemic is over.	.676	0.703		
Feeling of not having anyone to reach out to and share feelings.	.651	0.697		
<b>Work family conflict</b>			1.08	3.183%
Family's thinking of not having official work from home.	.771	0.681		
Experiencing constant fights with family members because of staying at home.	.699	0.653		
Unable to give 100% at work because of interruptions.	.626	0.669		
<b>Technical difficulties</b>			1.02	3.00%
Need a backup internet connection to get work done smoothly.	.767	0.784		
Virtual meetings disrupted because of the quality of the internet.	.729	0.752		
Finding it stressful to home-school children.	.530	0.412		
Extraction Method Principal Component Analysis, Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization				
Rotation converged in seven iterations.				

The second factor contained items that reflect the challenges women are facing regarding interaction, belongingness and networking among team members and the perception on performance standards. The third factor consisted of four items, accounted for 5.88% of the variance, and labelled as Manager's apathetic attitude. The third factor contained items that measure the manager's attitude regarding their perception on employee's ability to balance work and life, expectation of availability, doubt related to efficiency and setting deadlines. The factor accounted for 4.90% of the variance labelled as manager's empathy which consisted of three items. The fourth factor contained items that indicated the managers concern on sharing information, empathy and understanding the practical situation. Social capital labelled as fifth factor that consisted of three items, accounted for 4.12% of the variance. The factor contained items that measured the feeling of reduced social skill, complaining attitude and fear of inability in reaching out to anyone. The sixth factor consisted of three items, accounted for 3.18% of the variance, and considered as work family conflict. This factor included the perception of family member regarding the workload, chances of having conflict for being at home and inability to concentrate on work due to family interruptions. The seventh factor consisted of three items, accounted for 3.00% of the variance, and labelled as technical difficulties. The factor contained items that measure the degree of difficulties employees are facing due to poor network connection and home schooling of children.

**Table 4.3 Challenges of Women during Work from Home Subscale Means, Standard Deviations, and Cronbach Alpha Coefficients**

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach Alpha
<b>Personal Disadvantage</b>	2.9685	1.05165	.947
<b>Decline in Team dynamics</b>	2.5870	1.03418	.850
<b>Manager's apathetic attitude</b>	2.6796	1.13050	.805
<b>Manager's empathy</b>	3.2889	1.17548	.817
<b>Social capital</b>	2.7148	1.11972	.765
<b>Work family conflict</b>	2.2704	.94311	.760
<b>Technical difficulties</b>	2.6580	1.01065	.664

**Table 4.4: Correlation of factors**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Personal Disadvantage	-						
Decline in Team dynamics	.645**	-					
Manager's apathetic attitude	.648**	.456**	-				
Manager's empathy	.305**	.256**	.264**	-			
Social capital	.620**	.588**	.449**	.283**	-		
Work family conflict	.550**	.485**	.306**	.250**	.502**	-	
Technical difficulties	.458**	.419**	.450**	.303**	.476**	.374**	-
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).							

In Table 4.3, the means, standard deviations, and Cronbach alpha coefficients of the factors indicated. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient used to assess the internal consistency of each of the seven factors identified from the PCA. From the analysis, six of the seven factors produced Cronbach  $\alpha$  coefficients  $>0.7$ , Only one factor had the value, .664 which is still acceptable. This indicates good internal consistency, particularly for exploratory research (Hair, 1995; Muijs, 2010).

The correlation matrix table 4.4 indicates the correlation among factors which varies from .250 to .648. With all correlations being below .7, Multicollinearity among components does not appear to be present.

## 5. Conclusions

With a rapid change in the environmental settings due to the pandemic, research needs to be conducted on the impact of various working environments under the current circumstances. It is evident that modern technology has the power to transform the different ways in which employees work. In the current settings, to reduce physical contact, most organizations have started implementing the concept of working from home using technologies like ZOOM, Microsoft teams, Google meet etc. These technologies provide individuals with the ability to always work under any circumstances. This makes it necessary to conduct contemporary research related to the impact of advancement in technologies on working practices to identify the new challenges. The current study by conducting an exploratory analysis identifies significant factors to indicate the challenges of working women. It puts forward the issues an organization faces that can hamper the productivity of their professionals. The analysis has portrayed a clear factor structure of seven factors that include personal disadvantages, Manager's apathetic attitude, Decline in Team dynamics, Manager's empathy, social capital, work-family conflict and technical difficulties. Among these factors, personal disadvantages and technical difficulties were identified in the earlier studies which were steered towards identifying the challenges of working from home. This study has contributed by providing a few new factors which have not been previously addressed. The new factors are the Manager's apathetic attitude, Decline in Team dynamics, the Manager's empathy, social capital and work family conflict. It should be mentioned that the findings of this research are very important and unique as they help us comprehend the barriers that women professionals experience in their career, societal expectations, family responsibilities and others under the pandemic situation. Moreover, the estimates are also quite reliable.

This study though offers promising results, has its limitations. As the data is collected online, the sample size though sufficient, does not have substantial participation from women of different economic classes or professions which may have affected the generalizability of the results. There is a potential for a future study through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) conducted on independent samples to establish the stability of the factor structure. Moreover, a comparative study can be done to understand challenges across different sectors, or a gender-wise comparison can be made. An in-depth analysis can be done to investigate the intensity of the challenges and the consequences to a woman's stability and productivity.

The results of this paper provide the scope for fruitful interventions for more work life balance approaches which can be introduced by organizations. This is an original and fresh addition to the existing literature available on the personal and professional challenges of working women. Organizations must ensure that they are ready to take the required action to minimize the impact of the challenges. The article is helpful for organizations, HR practitioners as they will be able to understand the cluster of problems women are facing while trying to balance their multiple roles. The organization should design flexible performance appraisal systems during remote work to reduce burnout and isolation. Awareness and training program for managers can also increase the supportive attitude towards the working women to make them more efficient. It will further make it easier for them to design policies which enhance the work life balance among its employees. This research is expected to generate awareness in the society regarding the enormous burden women are exposed to because of their multiple roles while working from home. Also, it stresses upon the need to change the societal concept of traditional gender roles.

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