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## **Role of emotional regulation in managing burnout in working women: A quantitative investigation**

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### **Abstract**

Burnout is a psychological syndrome associated with various negative outcomes, such as impaired physical and mental health, lower job satisfaction, and reduced work performance. Emotional regulation is the ability to manage one's emotions in response to different situations and stimuli. It is considered a key factor in coping with stress and enhancing well-being. This study aims to investigate the role of emotional regulation in managing burnout in working women, using a quantitative approach. While burnout affects both men and women, the experiences and coping mechanisms of working women, who frequently juggle multiple roles and responsibilities, may differ significantly. This study seeks to uncover the nuances of how emotional regulation strategies influence the incidence and severity of burnout among this specific demographic. The study will contribute to the literature on burnout and emotional regulation by providing empirical evidence on the benefits and costs of different emotional regulation strategies for working women. The study will also have practical implications for organizations and practitioners who seek to promote the well-being and performance of their female employees. The researcher had conducted the study survey with the help of a questionnaire on 200 respondents to know the role and effect of Emotional Regulation in Managing Burnout in Working Women and concludes that there is significant impact of Emotional Regulation in Managing Burnout in Working Women.

**Keywords:** Burnout, emotional regulation, working women, work-life conflict, gender differences, emotional intelligence

### **Introduction**

Burnout, a psychological syndrome caused by chronic work stress, has far-reaching implications for individuals, organizations, and society. Working women, who juggle multiple roles and often face gender-based discrimination, are particularly susceptible to burnout. Their intricate web of career aspirations, family obligations, and societal expectations places immense strain on them, resulting in emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and decreased professional efficacy. In this context, emotional regulation—the ability to manage and modulate emotions in response to stressors—becomes a crucial tool for mitigating burnout.

Work-life conflict and burnout are particularly related in working women, notably in India. The lack of support from both family and organizations amplifies this conflict, creating a daunting challenge. While family and organizational support play essential roles in mediating work-life conflict and burnout, they only partially mitigate it. Resilience emerges as a critical factor, negatively correlating with burnout and moderating the impact of support systems. Resilience serves as a vital resource for women to manage stress and burnout caused by societal pressures and structural barriers. Addressing work-life conflict, enhancing support systems, and emphasizing resilience are crucial for working women's well-being (Gupta & Srivastava, 2020) [5].

Effective emotional regulation is pivotal in reducing burnout among working women. When examining cognitive emotional regulation, working women often employ negative strategies like "catastrophizing." They share tendencies for "rumination" and "positive reappraisal" with non-working women. This highlights the importance of emotional regulation, particularly in working women who lean towards negative coping mechanisms (J.B & Mathai, 2022) [7]. Emotional regulation, support systems, and resilience are critical factors in managing burnout among working women (Beauregard *et al.*, 2018) [2].

Burnout affects both genders, but working women face unique challenges. Juggling careers and household responsibilities heightens stress and susceptibility to burnout. Burnout not only affects mental health but also hinders career progression, making emotional regulation essential for women's career success. Gender-based disparities reveal that women, balancing work and family responsibilities, are particularly vulnerable to burnout.

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Psychological services and online consultations are necessary to support working women. Organizational psychologists play a vital role in developing tailored interventions, particularly in occupational health psychology. Online organizational psychology is increasingly important for addressing workplace issues (Mafishiraz, 2023)<sup>[11]</sup>.

Burnout is thus a significant concern for working women due to the intricate roles they manage. Emotional regulation plays a crucial role in mitigating burnout and research into emotional regulation dynamics among working women can help to enhance their well-being. Understanding how emotional regulation can prevent burnout can have long-term benefits for women's career advancement.

### Literature Review

High burnout prevalence among women (21%) is associated with factors like age, marital status, occupation, education, nationality, unemployment, financial strain, medication use, smoking, work demands, control, social support, somatic problems, and depression. Interventions are vital across financial, emotional, and physical domains. Longitudinal studies are needed to fully grasp burnout determinants among women. This emphasizes the urgency for multi-level interventions and research to enhance well-being in women facing burnout (Soares *et al.*, 2007)<sup>[13]</sup>.

Gender differences in emotional regulation strategies have implications for mental health. Males, adhering to societal norms, struggle more with emotion acceptance and impulse control. In contrast, women exhibit lower emotional clarity, possibly due to traditional gender roles. Women employ various strategies like rumination, acceptance, distraction, and seeking social support, while men tend towards emotional avoidance and impulsivity. These differences may impact the prevalence and presentation of psychiatric disorders. Tailored, gender-specific interventions can address maladaptive behaviors and prevent psychological issues, promoting mental well-being effectively (Kaur *et al.*, 2022)<sup>[8]</sup>.

M.K & Gupta (2021)<sup>[10]</sup> suggested that emotional intelligence has a significant positive correlation with subjective well-being in working women and that enhancing emotional intelligence can potentially improve the subjective well-being of working women. They highlighted the importance of helping women manage their emotions, which can significantly impact their overall emotional intelligence scores. Despite advancements in technology and legal frameworks, societal pressures and family demands continue to hinder the subjective well-being of working women. Improving emotional intelligence can assist working women in coping with these challenges. Emotional intelligence is seen as a valuable asset for performance, facilitating clear communication and effective leadership, ultimately fostering productive interactions in both work and personal life.

Noor & Zainuddin (2011)<sup>[12]</sup> uncovered the link between emotional labor (specifically surface acting and deep acting), work–family conflict, and burnout in married, female Malay teachers. Surface acting, where emotions are suppressed to meet expectations, is directly related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, contributing to burnout. Work–family conflict mediates this relationship, indicating that balancing work and family responsibilities leads to more significant work–family conflict and

emotional exhaustion. This underscores the importance of work–family balance in preventing burnout among female professionals, especially in non-Western contexts.

Castellano *et al.* (2019)<sup>[3]</sup> explored cognitive emotion regulation strategies in the workplace and their connection to positive and negative affect, engagement, and burnout and found that elaborative processes, like positive reappraisal and focusing on plans, correlate with positive affect and engagement, reducing burnout. Conversely, automatic strategies like rumination or catastrophizing associate with negative affect, increased burnout, and reduced positive affect. These findings emphasize the importance of cognitive emotion regulation in organizational contexts. Training programs aimed at enhancing elaborative emotion regulation processes can improve workers' well-being, job satisfaction, and overall job performance.

Mindfulness positively influences employee well-being by reducing emotional exhaustion and enhancing job satisfaction. Surface acting, an emotion regulation strategy, plays a crucial role as a mediator in this relationship. Mindfulness interventions also yield positive results. Notably, mindfulness appears to have a stronger impact on reducing emotional exhaustion than on boosting job satisfaction, possibly due to the influence of surface acting. This study highlights the bidirectional relationship between mindfulness and employee well-being, suggesting that higher mindfulness can reduce emotional exhaustion and increase job satisfaction, creating a positive feedback loop. Mindfulness-based interventions are valuable for employees dealing with emotional job demands (Hülshager *et al.*, 2013)<sup>[6]</sup>.

Zafuski & Makara-Studzińska (2022)<sup>[15]</sup> highlighted distinct burnout profiles among female emergency call-takers and dispatchers (ECDs). Three risk groups are identified: newcomers, those balancing work and family roles, and experienced ECDs with job satisfaction concerns. Tailored prevention strategies are crucial. Newcomers require candidate selection, psychological support, and coping skills. Those managing work and family should benefit from flexible work arrangements and societal support. Experienced ECDs need assistance in maintaining job satisfaction. Personalized approaches, including psychological support and flexible work arrangements, are recommended to effectively address burnout in working women.

High emotional intelligence is linked to improved self-awareness, emotional management, and interpersonal skills among female professionals. This positively affects job performance, job satisfaction, and the ability to handle stress and societal pressures, crucial for women balancing work and family roles. This emphasizes the importance of developing emotional intelligence to enhance the well-being of working women, suggesting it can aid in coping with performance pressures and societal expectations, promoting a healthier work-life balance. Interventions and support systems focusing on enhancing emotional intelligence are recommended to effectively combat burnout in female professionals (Leonova *et al.*, 2021)<sup>[9]</sup>.

Emotional intelligence significantly impacts the mental health of working women, with high emotional self-assessment leading to positive self-evaluation and autonomy in mental health. This enables informed decision-making, effective problem-solving, maintaining a cheerful

disposition, and managing personal and external issues. Similarly, high emotional expression promotes open communication about personal matters, effective problem resolution, and a positive psychological environment. Recognizing and nurturing emotional intelligence is crucial for promoting the mental well-being of working women and can enhance the effectiveness of mental health interventions (Arsha G & Ganesan, 2023) [1].

It's noteworthy that women tend to use a broader range of emotion regulation (ER) strategies and adapt them more flexibly than men. Specifically, women exhibit higher utilization of ER strategies across various scenarios and invest greater regulatory effort. This aligns with the idea that women often employ multiple strategies, such as self-blame and seeking social support. Recognizing the relevance to working women, it's essential to consider these contextual variations in ER processes as they may play a significant role in managing burnout (Goubet & Chryssikou, 2019) [4].

Templeton *et al.* (2019) [14] highlighted the burnout factors specific to women physicians as their numbers in medicine rise. While some research suggests higher burnout rates among them, differences in assessments and gender-specific expressions are recognized. Preventing burnout in all physicians and retaining women in medicine are priorities. Tailored interventions, including improvements like flexible work schedules and electronic health records, are proposed, with gender-specific measures like enhanced family leave policies and addressing gender bias and harassment. Involving women physicians in program development is essential, and ongoing support is emphasized to address persistent challenges throughout their careers effectively.

**Objective**

To know the role and impact of Emotional Regulation in

Managing Burnout in Working Women.

**Methodology**

The researcher had conducted the study survey with the help of a questionnaire on 200 respondents to know the role and effect of Emotional Regulation in Managing Burnout in Working Women. The primary data is collected through “random sampling method” and data was analysed by “mean and t-test.”

**Findings**

Respondent’s general details are shared in the table below where 20.5% are below 42 years of age, 46.0% comes in the category of 42-48 years of age group and 33.5% are above 48 years of age. 35.5% of them are in education sector, 26.0% in banking, 34.0% in corporate and rest 4.5% are in other working sectors.

**Table 1:** General Details

Variable	Respondent	Percentage
<b>Age (years)</b>		
Below 42	41	20.5
42-48	92	46.0
Above 48	67	33.5
Total	200	100
<b>Working sector</b>		
Education	71	35.5
Banking	52	26.0
Corporate	68	34.0
Others	9	4.5
Total	200	100
<b>Work experience</b>		
Less than 5 years	98	49.0
More than 5 years	102	51.0
Total	200	100

**Table 2:** Role and impact of Emotional Regulation in Managing Burnout in Working Women

S. No.	Statements	Mean Value	t value	Sig.
1.	Self-awareness help to recognize and acknowledge emotions, stressors, and triggers	3.13	1.871	0.031
2.	Emotional regulation manages societal expectations and modulate emotions in response to stressors	3.21	3.041	0.001
3.	Encourage open communication and providing spaces to express feelings and manage burnout	3.19	2.795	0.003
4.	Effective emotional regulation involves setting boundaries to prevent overwhelming stress	3.15	2.162	0.016
5.	Emotional regulation helps to develop effective coping strategies	3.16	2.344	0.010
6.	Emotional regulation contributes to foster a supportive work environment	3.14	2.017	0.023
7.	Emotional regulation is facilitated by having control over one's schedule and work environment	3.18	2.618	0.005
8.	Training programs that focus on emotional intelligence skills help to manage burnout	3.20	2.921	0.002
9.	Building a strong support network for resources, feedback, and encouragement	3.12	1.732	0.042
10.	Remote work options or flexible hours empower women to manage their professional and personal responsibilities	3.17	2.496	0.007

Table above is showing different role of Emotional Regulation in Managing Burnout in Working Women. The respondent says that emotional regulation manages societal expectations and modulate emotions in response to stressors with mean value 3.21, Training programs that focus on emotional intelligence skills help to manage burnout with mean value 3.20, Encourage open communication and providing spaces to express feelings and manage burnout with mean value 3.19 and Emotional regulation is facilitated by having control over one's schedule and work environment with mean value 3.18. The respondent shares that remote work options or flexible hours empower women to manage their professional and personal responsibilities

with mean value 3.17, Emotional regulation helps to develop effective coping strategies with mean value 3.16, Effective emotional regulation involves setting boundaries to prevent overwhelming stress with mean value 3.15 and Emotional regulation contributes to foster a supportive work environment with mean value 3.14. The respondent also shares that Self-awareness help to recognize and acknowledge emotions, stressors, and triggers with mean value 3.13 and building a strong support network for resources, feedback, and encouragement with mean value 3.12. All statements pertaining to emotional regulation exhibit statistical significance, with p-values below 0.05 following the application of a t-test.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, emotional regulation is a crucial skill for working women who face the risk of burnout due to the multiple demands and challenges they encounter in their personal and professional lives. Emotional regulation can help them cope with stress, enhance their well-being, and improve their performance and relationships. However, emotional regulation is not a one-size-fits-all solution, and different strategies may have different effects depending on the context and the individual. Therefore working women should be aware of their own emotional needs and preferences, and seek to adopt adaptive and flexible emotional regulation strategies that suit their goals and situations. They should also seek external support from their employers, colleagues, family, and friends, who can provide them with resources, feedback, and encouragement to manage their emotions effectively. By doing so, working women can reduce the negative impact of burnout and achieve a better balance between their work and life domains. The insights gained from this study will provide valuable perspectives and directions for future research and interventions to ensure the mental, emotional, and professional well-being of working women is adequately addressed. By recognizing the significance of emotional regulation and taking proactive steps, we can work towards creating a more supportive and balanced environment for working women, ultimately reducing burnout and enhancing their overall quality of life.

The study was conducted to know the role and impact of Emotional Regulation in Managing Burnout in Working Women and found that emotional regulation manages societal expectations and modulate emotions in response to stressors, Training programs that focus on emotional intelligence skills help to manage burnout, Encourage open communication and providing spaces to express feelings and manage burnout and Emotional regulation is facilitated by having control over one's schedule and work environment. The study concludes that there is significant impact of Emotional Regulation in Managing Burnout in Working Women.

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