

Innovations

Balancing Graduate Studies and Work: Challenges for Public Sector Mothers

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Abstract: Mothers in the public sector pursuing graduate degrees face significant challenges balancing academic, professional, and family responsibilities. This review examines the impact of multitasking on academic success, career productivity, and personal well-being. The demands of higher education, job duties, and parenting create a complex environment requiring institutional support, resilience, and time management. Time constraints pose a major challenge as working mothers juggle education, careers, and parenting. Role conflicts often lead to stress, burnout, and mental fatigue, reducing overall productivity and well-being. Emotional stress from self-doubt and guilt further complicates their ability to meet expectations in both personal and professional spheres. Support networks play a crucial role in managing these difficulties. Flexible work policies, academic accommodations, and family support improve graduate success. Additionally, hybrid courses and online learning enhance accessibility and flexibility. However, systemic barriers such as limited mental health services, gender discrimination, and rigid work policies persist. This review highlights the need for comprehensive policies supporting work-life balance, particularly in the public sector, where structured schedules often hinder academic pursuits. Employers and universities must collaborate to implement strong support systems, including mental health services, mentoring programs, and childcare assistance. Fostering a culture of flexibility and inclusivity can help working mothers manage their demanding roles effectively. Ultimately, the success of mothers in graduate programs depends on institutional adjustments, personal resilience, and social support. Addressing these challenges allows policymakers and academic institutions to create a more inclusive, adaptable, and sustainable learning environment.

Keywords: Work-life balance, Role conflict, Emotional resilience, Institutional support
Career Productivity

Introduction

Multitasking has emerged as a distinguishing feature of modern life, especially for women balancing the complex responsibilities of parenthood, professions, and higher education (Costa, 2020). This research examines the complex obstacles women face in the public sector pursuing graduate degrees, a population experiencing a unique combination of stresses that need thorough academic investigation. The worldwide increase in women's engagement in the workforce and higher education has resulted in more people balancing responsibilities, each requiring substantial time, energy, and emotional commitment (Makipour et al., 2021). The increasing participation of women in the workforce and higher education highlights the unique challenges they face in balancing professional, academic, and personal responsibilities, demanding further academic exploration.

At the continental level, discrepancies in childcare support, parental leave legislation, and social expectations across various areas intensify the challenges encountered by working moms (Torres et al., 2024). Nationally, the public sector, although frequently regarded as providing more stable and family-oriented employment, still poses significant challenges related to workload, inflexible schedules, and restricted prospects for advancement in the workplace, complicating the lives of graduate-student mothers.

Regional differences in access to excellent education, healthcare, and social services increase the inequalities in support networks accessible to these women, impacting their capacity to handle their many obligations effectively (Bernstein, 2001). The global, continental, national, and regional trends underscore the pressing need to comprehend the problems encountered by mothers doing graduate study while employed in the public sector. Current research often analyzes the issues working moms or graduate students face, neglecting to address the synergistic impact of these dual positions, exposing a substantial gap in understanding (Thomson & Kehily, 2010). Research on work-life balance typically emphasizes the corporate sector or particular professions, neglecting the unique context of the public sector characterized by its distinct organizational culture and service-oriented objectives. As a result, there is a significant lack of studies examining the intersection of motherhood, graduate education, and public sector employment, creating a crucial gap in our comprehension of these women's daily lives and coping mechanisms. (Lundquist et al., 2020). There is a critical gap in research exploring the combined challenges of motherhood, graduate education, and public sector employment, particularly in understanding how these women navigate their unique work-life balance.

Although several studies recognize women's challenges in reconciling parenting with paid work (Bravo-Moreno, 2021), few investigate the additional complexities of obtaining higher degrees. This research seeks to address these gaps by thoroughly examining the problems and coping strategies used by women in the public sector who are concurrently pursuing graduate courses to enhance their knowledge of their journeys and demands (Boakye et al., 2021). This research addresses the challenges women encounter balancing several duties, often to the detriment of their well-being and academic achievement. The local environment offers a compelling framework for our study, as the rising number of women obtaining higher education while managing children and participating in the workforce illustrates a more significant cultural trend (Lovell, 2013). The lack of sufficient support structures and resources for these women in the local context highlights the need and significance of this research, as it aims to guide policy and practice to enhance their academic and professional pursuits. Gowda and Rao, 2018.

This research aims to not only record the challenges but also establish actionable strategies and recommendations that can be executed at the institutional and policy levels to foster a more supportive environment for mothers seeking graduate education while employed in the public sector. Fisher et al. (2020) This qualitative research aims to investigate the experiences of women engaged in graduate education while employed in the public sector, focusing on their problems and coping methods. This study hopes to clarify problems and techniques to guide the formulation of interventions and policies that more effectively assist these women in attaining their professional and educational goals. Benson et al. (2020). This research seeks to identify challenges and create strategies to better support women balancing graduate education and public sector jobs.

Despite the growing incidence of multitasking among women, considerable gaps persist in our understanding of the problems encountered by moms doing graduate study while employed in the public sector (Covert, 2014). Current studies often analyze the experiences of working moms or graduate students separately, neglecting the complicated nature of their overlapping responsibilities (Yeigh, 2020).

These inadequacies include an absence of comprehensive qualitative research examining the real-world circumstances of these women, with a restricted comprehension of the influence of institutional policies and support mechanisms on their capacity to excel in both academic and professional domains. Moreover, the study must examine the multifaceted identities of these women, including their race, ethnicity, socioeconomic level, and cultural background, to comprehend how these elements influence their experiences and resource accessibility (Hillier, 2021). The

lack of qualitative research on the real-world challenges faced by women, particularly considering their diverse identities and institutional support, limits the understanding of their academic and professional success.

This research considerably improves the current body of knowledge (Ravindranath et al., 2021). Initially, it presents a comprehensive, qualitative narrative of women's experiences pursuing graduate study while employed in the public sector, clarifying the various problems they encounter and the coping mechanisms they use. Lundquist et al. (2020) Secondly analyze the influence of institutional policies and support systems on these women's capacity to manage their various tasks, highlighting areas for improvement to facilitate their success more effectively (Lloyd and Rosman, 2005). Third, it examines the interrelated identities of these women, offering a more comprehensive understanding of how their race, ethnicity, social level, and cultural background influence their experiences and access to services. (Samuels & Ross-Sheriff, 2008) Ultimately, it provides practical suggestions for officials and organizations to foster a more advantageous environment for women seeking graduate study while employed in the public sector. (Bodkin and Fleming, 2019). The research will enhance our understanding of the significance of examining female graduate students (Harrington, 2013). This research highlights the challenges and coping strategies of women in the public sector pursuing graduate studies, emphasizing the need for improved institutional support and understanding of their diverse identities to foster success.

The study aims to investigate the problems encountered during academic pursuits, as underscored by Taukeni (2014), who highlights the need to include a diverse range of students, especially those historically marginalized, whether officially or informally. The research will also aid graduate students by establishing a foundation for support. Crumpton-Young et al. (2016). The study emphasizes the importance of including historically marginalized students in academic pursuits and aims to establish support foundations for graduate students.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Managing parenthood, public sector work, and graduate school requires a precise balance of time, energy, and resources (Yeigh, 2020). Due to the complexities of management jobs, women often struggle to balance their personal lives with their work (Makipour et al., 2021). In this challenging balancing act, moms must fulfill public sector job performance goals, kid demands, and academic requirements. The sense of being frail and always dissatisfied is crushing. Women frequently mother to escape their jobs and meet their personal and professional requirements (Thomson & Kehily,

2010). Balancing parenthood, public sector work, and graduate school is a difficult challenge for women, often leading to feelings of exhaustion and dissatisfaction.

To address this unusual confluence of issues, theoretical and conceptual frameworks that explain the experiences of these multitasking women and their academic and professional challenges must be studied. The obstacles moms face while pursuing graduate education while working in the public sector may be analyzed using Role Theory, which states that people have numerous roles with different expectations and responsibilities (Hillier, 2021). When roles collide, multitasking moms often suffer role strain, which causes tension, anxiety, and misery. For example, graduate education requires attending lectures, completing papers, and studying for tests, whereas childcare requires feeding, cleaning, and emotional support. Busen (1988). Job duties including attending meetings, managing projects, and servicing the public may increase job pressure and complexity. Gordon et al (2011)

The Work-Life idea Conflict arises when work interferes with personal life or vice versa. Gordon et al (2011) Time-based and strain-based conflict may occur in the public sector when one position takes up too much time and another becomes exhausted. Working moms may face these issues. 2016 (Creary & Gordon). Work-life conflict, particularly time-based and strain-based, can be challenging for working moms, as excessive demands from one role can interfere with personal life and lead to exhaustion.

Multitasking moms may benefit from Social Cognitive Theory, Role Theory, and Work-Life Conflict. In molding behavior and results, this paradigm emphasizes self-efficacy, the belief that one can succeed in certain situations or accomplish a job. Mothers who doubt their ability to handle their many duties may lose enthusiasm and tenacity, which may hurt their academic and career success. Brown, Lenten (2023). Multitasking moms can benefit from social cognitive and role theories, as self-efficacy influences their motivation and success in balancing academic and career responsibilities.

Interpersonal support from family, friends, and coworkers may help reduce multitasking stress. Organizational elements including supervisor support, workplace regulations, and resource availability may either help or hinder a mother's academic, professional, and family commitments (Tingey et al., 1996). Unfortunately, research shows that Dependent Care Accounts, Child Care Resource Guides, Parent Information Fairs, and altered work schedules do not reduce work-family interference. Existing organizational supports may offer little protection (Scharlach, 2001) (Bailyn, 2010). This suggests that the programs may not be enough to meet multitasking moms' unique

issues, highlighting the need for more thorough and individualized treatments. (2018)
Laar & Meeussen

A "flexible line of defense" highlights how psychological and sociocultural factors, such as perceived social support and psychological role engagement, moderate role stress management (Gigliotti, 1999). This view suggests that women with strong social support networks and high job commitment may multitask better. Student moms should get counselling to help them cope (Dankyi et al., 2019). A strong social support network and job commitment can help women, including student moms, better manage multitasking and stress.

Work interference with personal life was also linked to increased personal life permeability and worse work flexibility (Boakye et al., 2021). Organizations with certain rules may allow pregnant women to work (Agarwal & Nelson, 2023). Flexible work arrangements may also help retain working moms (Ravindranath et al., 2021).

Review of Related Literature

Mothers in the public sector face significant challenges balancing graduate studies, work, and family responsibilities. Role conflicts, tight deadlines, and emotional stress impact academic success, career productivity, and well-being. This review explores the effects of multitasking on working mothers in graduate school, highlighting institutional policies, coping strategies, and technological advancements that can help ease these burdens. Flexible work policies, academic accommodations, and online learning improve accessibility. By addressing these challenges, policymakers and institutions can create a more supportive and adaptable learning environment, ensuring professional women can successfully pursue higher education while managing their careers and family obligations.

Synopsis Struggles of Balancing Education, Career, and Motherhood

The perfect combination of graduate studies, motherhood, and public sector employment requires significant time, energy, and emotional commitment, creating complex challenges for women managing these diverse roles (Ravindranath et al., 2021). Work-life integration is complicated by academics and the public sector; therefore, these women's struggles must be better understood (Hillier, 2021). Graduate schools' tough curriculum, research, and scheduling strain students, forcing them to balance academic and personal obligations (Yeigh, 2020).

While public sector jobs provide employment security and stability, they frequently require long hours, bureaucratic processes, and emotionally draining public interactions, which further limits working mothers' capacities (Taukeni, 2014). Public

sector jobs offer stability but often come with long hours and bureaucratic challenges, which can increase stress for working mothers. These factors further limit their ability to balance work and family responsibilities effectively.

Executive women may find work-family enrichment difficult due to the conflicting demands of career and home life. Working parents have obstacles and may consider quitting (Ravindranath et al., 2021). Many women have considered quitting their jobs, highlighting the difficulty of keeping them in the workforce (Ravindranath et al., 2021). Flexible work arrangements help working mothers balance their personal and professional lives, allowing them to pursue career development opportunities via time management (Ravindranath et al., 2021). The problems women experience managing personal lives with hard jobs may harm their well-being and quality of life (Makipour et al., 2021). Scholars, particularly women caregivers, struggle to balance academic and family commitments (Dapiton et al., 2020). Institutional support, legislative changes, and personal coping skills are needed to solve this problem.

In the Philippines, mothers struggle to balance teaching and motherhood (Espartinez, 2022). Academics must balance work and family due to academic pressures and changing educational conditions (Dapiton et al., 2020). Student-mothers struggle academically (Bautista et al., 2015). Students must keep studying despite these challenges. Institutions must address these concerns to create an inclusive environment that supports student mothers' academic and overall well-being. Taukeni (2014). Student mothers in the Philippines face academic challenges due to balancing teaching, motherhood, and academic pressures, highlighting the need for institutions to support their well-being.

Discussions

Balancing academic, professional, and home responsibilities makes pursuing graduate degrees challenging for mothers in the public sector. They face time constraints, role conflicts, emotional stress, and mental fatigue, impacting academic performance, career growth, and well-being. This review explores how institutional support, flexible work policies, and technological advancements can ease these challenges and address structural barriers. It highlights the need for comprehensive strategies to support working women in higher education, ensuring a more adaptable and inclusive learning environment that fosters both professional and personal success.

Key Challenges

Time Management and Prioritization

Professionals must balance diligently public sector jobs, difficult graduate courses, and the demands of kids. This convergence needs excellent time management and prioritization (Wilson et al., 2022). According to Jain (2009), these persons typically

have a convoluted web of obligations that blurs the distinctions between job, school, and family. Lindgreen and Benedetto's 2020 study found that many public sector professions' high time constraints restrict flexibility and require rigorous preparation, exacerbating these challenges.

Public sector personnel who raise children must manage their time and prioritize their tasks. Due to the demands of public sector job, workers must typically work long hours, follow strict timetables, and react to urgent requests. This makes it hard to study enough. 2019 Newhouse et al. study.

Parenting involves emotional support, child care, and housework, making this challenge harder to overcome. In this scenario, prioritizing is essential because individuals must weigh the relative importance of various activities and spend their time accordingly. To meet academic deadlines and family needs, you may need to sacrifice personal time or delay less essential professional tasks. Odumeru (2013). Parenting demands emotional support, childcare, and housework, requiring individuals to prioritize tasks and sometimes sacrifice personal time to meet academic and family needs.

Role Conflict and Overload

Women face role conflict and pressure when motherhood, education, and maybe public sector job all collide (Hillier, 2021). Pressures from caring for children, succeeding in difficult schools, and reaching professional requirements, maybe in the public sector, produce this stress (Makipour et al., 2021). Having several responsibilities might make you feel tugged in numerous directions, making it challenging to accomplish well in each one (Makipour et al., 2021).

School moms frequently feel anxious and burnt out trying to juggle their multiple professions (Holm et al., 2015). Academic demands like increasing research standards and more teaching make job-family balance difficult (Dapiton et al., 2020). According to Gadzali et al. (2023), outside influences might worsen role conflict for academic mothers, affecting their health and work satisfaction. The cerebral strain of graduate school, the emotional effort of motherhood, and the social expectations of public sector job may easily overwhelm (Gowda & Rao, 2018). School moms often experience anxiety and burnout from balancing academic demands, motherhood, and external pressures, which negatively impact their health and job satisfaction.

This overload is related to time management and the mental and emotional stamina required to handle everything of life. Media portrays passionate mothering as desirable, which adds even greater pressure on academic women to devote time and

energy on their children (Miller & Riley, 2021). This assumption differs from schoolwork, which requires time and thinking. Women researchers still struggle to combine work-life and study productivity. Job ambitions and family obligations must frequently be balanced. Academic mothers may struggle in nations that are evolving toward more equitable family structures because of cultural norms regarding women's duties in the home (Dapiton et al., 2020). Academic mothers face the challenge of balancing work, study, and family responsibilities, compounded by societal expectations and cultural norms about women's roles in the home.

Academic competitiveness, managerial pressures, and severe workloads might stress academic personnel, according to Tsybuliak et al. (2023). While working, mothers may struggle to reconcile their academic obligations (Mary & Ramesh, 2020). Many female instructors with children encounter institutional and psychological barriers in academia (Hermann et al., 2014). Fixing these issues requires institutional assistance, regulatory reforms, and societal shifts to respect mothers in academia (Rosewell, 2021; Sümer & Eslen-Ziya, 2022). Academic mothers face significant stress due to competitive pressures, heavy workloads, and institutional barriers, highlighting the need for institutional support and societal changes to better accommodate their needs.

Doctoral student women typically struggle with ambivalence, coping strategies, a never-ending quest for balance, and the "superwoman syndrome," which involves attempting to excel in all tasks without understanding one's limitations (Lundquist et al., 2020). The blurring of responsibilities makes it impossible to distinguish between motherhood and school demands. Rosewell (2021) states academics' views on being a parent and an academic depend on their goals. Academic women balance public and private life to suit varied requirements (Gilbert et al., 2022).

Successful women academics typically require family assistance and housekeepers to manage their workload (Bao & Wang, 2022). The impact of maternity on women's careers suggests that institutions must support academic mothers and create policies that address their specific challenges (Rosewell, 2021). Graduate students' and working mothers' experiences in higher education must be discussed. It can make society fairer and more inclusive (Hillier, 2021).

Lack of Support

Lack of support from family, spouses, companies, and schools might make multitasking difficult (Lin, 2013; Mark, 2015). Lack of support sometimes leads to poor understanding or adjustment to the unique needs of people juggling many goals, resulting in increased stress and worse performance (Sanbonmatsu et al., 2013). Lack

of a support network may impair time management, prioritisation, and work-life balance (Salvucci & Taatgen, 2008).

The availability and expense of daycare also affect parents' multitasking ability, particularly those with young children (McBride, 1991). Parents may struggle to work, study, or engage in other activities due to childcare costs (Taukeni, 2014). Keeping a good balance is harder for parents who work and study, but there is little data on how they do it (Boakye et al., 2021). The confluence of these issues highlights the necessity for comprehensive support systems that meet the needs of multitaskers (Harrington, 2013).

Providing proper assistance for public sector students is complicated and frequently inconsistent, due to institutional devotion and resource allocation. Some public sector organizations provide tuition reimbursement or flexible work arrangements to help employees develop, while others don't. (2016) Textbook Support inconsistency between public sector institutions may limit professional and personal growth, exacerbating inequalities. Murray (2015) Women need family help with housework (Majid, 2019). Academic women frequently need strong family support to balance career and home (Bao & Wang, 2022). Some communities continue to assign women a large share of family duties (Dapiton et al., 2020; Yasmin & Husna, 2020). When paired with parenting, this anticipation may greatly impact their academic and professional careers (Dapiton et al., 2020). Inconsistent support across public sector institutions and gendered family responsibilities can hinder academic and professional growth, particularly for women balancing career and home duties.

Mental and Physical Health

Chronic stress, sleep deprivation, and poor self-care interact to threaten mental and physical health, causing a cascade of negative impacts that may lower quality of life (Johnson, 2014).

Mental stress, often caused by work, financial, or interpersonal pressures, activates the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis, dysregulating cortisol secretion and increasing physiological arousal (Reeth et al., 2000). This persistent stimulation, although initially beneficial in encouraging alertness and mobilizing resources, may damage organ systems over time, increasing the risk of cardiovascular disease, metabolic dysfunction, and immunological suppression (McEwen, 2012).

Sleep deprivation, often linked to chronic stress, disrupts neuroendocrine and metabolic systems, worsening these consequences. Frequent sleep disruptions may affect stress systems. Even modest to moderate sleep restriction may temporarily boost autonomic sympatho-adrenal system (Meerlo et al., 2008).

Psychosocial stresses may cause sleep problems, and poor sleep might increase vulnerability to them (Maheshwari & Shaukat, 2019). Chronic stress also affects psychological well-being, raising guilt and anxiety (Chouhan, 2016).

People frequently feel inadequate and unable to satisfy the demands of their personal and professional life, leading to continuous self-criticism and low self-esteem. Stressnegative consequences are caused by multiple neuroendocrine, inflammatory, and epigenetic pathways. Mental stress may affect gene expression patterns via epigenetic alterations including DNA methylation and histone acetylation, which may cause long-term brain changes (Mariotti, 2015). Chronic stress and sleep deprivation are worsened by poor self-care, which is routinely neglected in contemporary life. 2012 (McEwen)

Academic and Professional Pressures

Graduate school is cognitively stimulating, but academic and social pressures must be managed. Graduate students must manage difficult coursework, studies, and personal life (McAvinia et al., 2018). Student workers in the public sector struggle much more to maintain this delicate balance. Because public sector positions are high-pressure, have strong performance criteria, and need students to consistently demonstrate their skills and efficacy (Lindgreen & Benedetto, 2020).

These aspects generate a difficult issue that requires strong time management, strength, and stress reduction (Tsybuliak et al., 2023). You must acknowledge the pressures and find strategies to manage them to get through this difficult scenario (Mary & Ramesh, 2020).The educational environment may scare graduate students. In competitive areas, it may be overwhelming to perform well in school, do innovative research, and publish findings (Halat et al., 202). Schools' frequent examination and evaluation may make students nervous and doubt themselves, particularly with rigorous professors and difficult content. Year 2023 (Tsybuliak et al.)Many graduate students struggle with money, which adds to their stress. Trying to juggle school and job might worsen these issues, leading to burnout and poor academic performance. 2020 (Nir, Eran-Jona). Working for the government is stressful. Workers in this sector must navigate complex societal challenges, government systems, and limited resources. (2022, Seucea& Celin).

People who work in the public sector and attend graduate school have particular challenges that might affect their health and career. High concern might make it tougher to get along with people in and out of school, which can make someone less devoted to their objectives, according to Saqib et al. (2023). Minor concern might motivate instructors to work harder and accomplish more, according to

Subbey (2023). However, long-term educational stress, particularly when compounded by money or family issues, is harmful. Worry may lead to suicide attempts if not managed (Uyanne, 2022). Test pressure and time constraints increase classroom stress (Ezelote et al., 2021). Student stress is growing due to family pressures, difficult school applications, and government rules (Sheykhjan, 2015). Thus, public sector college students must manage these challenges alone to be healthy and productive.

Happy people are more productive; thus, companies that prioritize employee satisfaction generally receive better results (Haq et al., 2020). Positive and helpful workplaces boost productivity, retention, and commitment to corporate objectives. Students typically report school stress them out, a cross-cultural feature (Pascoe et al., 2019). Finally, graduate students in the public sector struggle with intense academic work, demanding employment, and trying to maintain their health and happiness.

Financial Strain

Graduate school is a future investment. However, increasing advanced course fees may impact students' finances and academic performance and well-being (Schulze-Cleven et al., 2017). Students in low-paying fields struggle to finance tuition, living expenses, and other academic fees (Hornak et al., 2010). High student loan debt might affect graduate students' financial stability and deter them from pursuing hobbies (Naceanceno et al., 2021).

Taking on student debt is hard ("How We Arrived Here," 2012). Students may have to choose between working long hours and studying and researching, impacting class performance (Eran-Jona & Nir, 2020). Writing persuasive grants, scholarships, and fellowship applications takes time and work, adding to student stress.

Financial stress, anxiety, and despair may harm graduate students' mental and physical health (Gerrard & Roberts, 2006). Writing and research need skill, increasing these challenges. Students may struggle to balance work and life due to deadlines, research, and academic pressure. Kim et al (2021).

Despite being student-centered, institutions may not provide family-friendly services (Elliott, 2022). Additional stress may affect mental, emotional, and physical health (Dankyi et al., 2019). Financial strain and academic pressure may cause stress and burnout, decreasing students' performance and quality of life. Graduate students need more financial aid, affordable childcare, and financial literacy training. Walsh et al. (2021)

The Need for Increased Support Systems

Parents, graduate students, and public servants have unique obstacles that need full support (Yeigh, 2020). These duties involve good time management and mental and physical strength (Taukeni, 2014). Higher education, family, and public service may produce role overload and stress, affecting emotional and professional well-being (Dapiton et al., 2020). Complex demands may need careful navigation (Makipour et al., 2021).

Moms in this scenario need affordable childcare to attend classes, learn, and work without stress. Complementary childcare and family assistance services allow up time and energy for academic and professional pursuits by handling house, elder, and other domestic tasks. Managing the psychological stress of diverse obligations requires mental health care (Holm et al., 2015).

Family support networks provide women time for work and childcare (Bao & Wang, 2022). Student moms generally lack time for schooling and childcare (Taukeni, 2014). Online graduate student-mothers may benefit from research on spouse or partner emotional support and guilt's influence on decision-making (Covert, 2014). Mentorship and peer support groups may build community and provide tips, encouragement, and guidance (Covert, 2014).

Student mothers struggle to reconcile family and school due to time constraints (Dankyi et al., 2019). Tools and networks from these programs may help women overcome obstacles and achieve academic and professional goals. Motherhood affects each person's mentality and restructures obligations and behaviors via severe physiological and emotional changes (Amorim et al., 2021). Remember that women have academic challenges, thus research must integrate the Multiple Dimensions of Identity Model.

The Value of Self-Care and Boundary Setting Even if personal experiences are frequently misconstrued, self-care is vital in the first year of motherhood, when lifestyle changes are significant (Currie, 2009). Self-care includes a variety of activities that meet a person's physical, emotional, and mental needs, fostering balance and refreshment. Mothers often work as main caregivers, home managers, and career professionals. Better Help & Team, 2024.

Mothers must establish boundaries for their time, energy, and emotions as part of self-care. Women adjust to their needs and those of their children throughout their lives (Barkin & Wisner, 2013). Motherhood and self-discovery include nonreflective habits, shadows, and self-discovery (Hartrick, 1997). This might include unwillingness to delegate, trouble saying no, or prioritizing others' needs before their own.

Self-care and boundary setting for women help the whole family. When moms prioritize their own needs, they can handle parenting problems, react to their children with tolerance and empathy, and create a happy family. Better Help & Team, 2024. According to Martínez et al. (2021), self-care involves self-awareness, self-control, and self-reliance to achieve, maintain, or improve optimum health and well-being. Thus, self-care and boundary setting may help moms enjoy parenting and build healthy, happy families. 2013 (Barkin & Wisner)

Conclusion and Recommendation

The research underscores the considerable obstacles encountered by women employed in the public sector while seeking graduate education. Challenges emerge from time constraints, job inconsistency, and psychological stress, adversely affecting academic achievement, professional efficiency, and mental health. Despite the presence of institutional support, flexible work arrangements, and technological progress, institutional barriers such as inadequate mental health services, gender discrimination, and restrictive organizational frameworks continue. Addressing these issues requires a synthesis of distinct courage, shared assistance, and legislative measures to cultivate a more inclusive and sustainable educational setting.

Universities and public sector employers should cooperate to establish comprehensive support systems to solve these concerns. These should include accessible mental health treatments, adaptable work practices, and childcare support programs. Moreover, cultivating a culture of inclusion and flexibility helps mitigate the challenges encountered by working moms. By implementing these modifications, schools may improve professional women's capacity to effectively pursue their educational and career objectives while maintaining a healthy personal life.

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