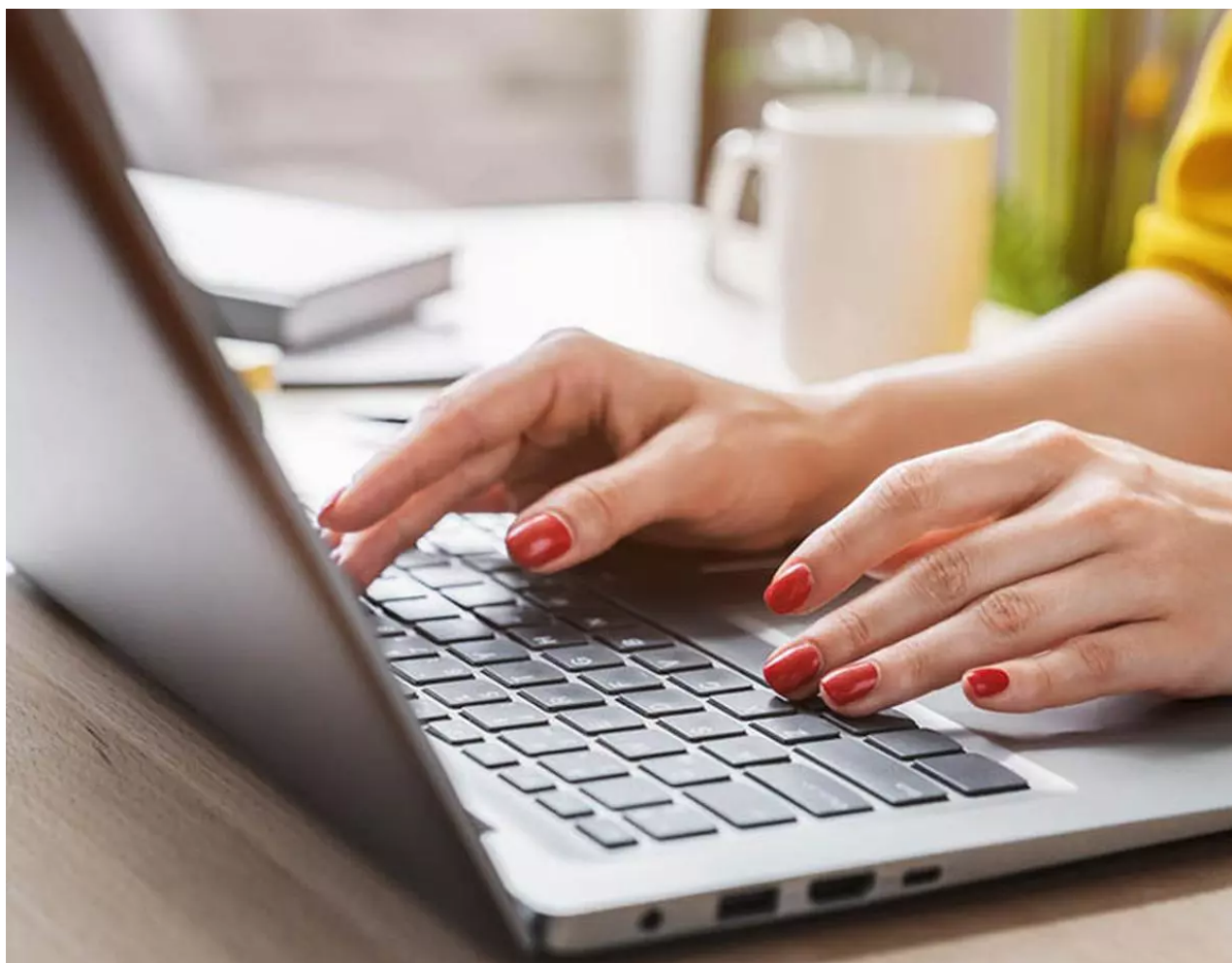


# Women in just 32% of districts have achieved work-life balance: IIMA study

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The study reveals that despite rising literacy among women aged between 15 to 49, only 46.1 per cent of the districts reported educational empowerment among women | Photo Credit: Inside Creative House

A study conducted by the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) across 700-odd districts in the country has found that women respondents in just 32 per cent of these districts felt they were able to achieve work-life balance, highlighting ongoing challenges with unpaid domestic work.

The study that compared and analysed data for women from a total of 705 districts across the country from the National Family Health Survey-4 (NFHS-4) and NFHS-5, reveals that despite the rising literacy among women aged between 15 to 49, only 46.1 per cent of the districts reported educational empowerment among women. Speaking during the report

launch, Professor Satish Deodhar, Dean (Faculty), IIMA, underscored the need for men's participation in sharing household responsibilities to achieve work-life balance for both genders.

“Of the four parameters studied in the report, the work-life balance parameter shows the least progress. Only about 32 per cent of women reported that they could manage work-life balance. In my opinion, women's workforce participation is intricately linked to responsible household work participation by men. As men have not taken their equal share of household responsibilities proactively, it ultimately hinders the quality of labour-force participation of women. This report by the Gender Centre at IIMA serves not only as a measure of progress, but also as a roadmap for future interventions to enhance women's empowerment and participation in the workforce,” Professor Deodhar said about the report prepared by the Gender Centre at IIMA. The report is titled ‘Women's Empowerment at the Subnational Level: Towards Achieving Gender Equality (SDG 5)’.

The report prepared by the centre, serves as a localised tool that is designed to measure empowerment at the district level in four key areas essential to achieving SDG 5 by the United Nations: 1) Decision-making, autonomy over income, and physical mobility, 2) Control over income and economic empowerment, 3) Educational and informational empowerment, and 4) Work-life balance.

Of the sample of 705 districts in the study, 67.5 per cent of districts reported that women were empowered in decision-making and mobility. “There has been an increase in women's involvement in decision-making, particularly regarding their own healthcare, household purchases, and how to spend their husband's income. The percentage of women who make decisions, either alone or jointly with their partners, has grown,” says the release from IIMA.

The percentage of women who have ownership of their own asset (land or house), alone or jointly with their partner, has also increased from 29.09 per cent in NFHS-4 to 35 per cent in NFHS-5. The average number of women completing higher education has increased from 11.43 per 100 women in NFHS-4 to 14.42 per 100 women in NFHS-5. But primary and secondary education didn't show a significant difference.

Further, interest in mass media has also surged from 69.12 per cent in NFHS-4 to 76.24 per cent in NFHS-5, with more women engaging with various forms of media, indicating greater exposure to mass media (listening to radio, watching television, and reading newspapers).