

ABSTRACT

Historically, men and women have been socialized to behave in a particular way and perform roles perceived as feminine or masculine. In this work arrangement, men's family roles entailed economic support whilst women's family roles involved emotional support and nurturance. However, with modernization and profound social change, some women have combined both economic and culturally defined feminine roles. But it is not clear how the "double life" impacts on the mental health of such women. Therefore, this paper explores the influence of gender and worker roles on the mental health among urban women in Kenya with focus of Kawangware slums. The authors argue that contemporary woman participate in formal employment role because of different reasons and that gender and employment/worker roles contribute to women mental illness. The paper concludes by giving recommendations to the government, employers, and other relevant stakeholders in gender issues for policy making to promote wellbeing of women at work and home.

Keywords: Women mental health, women formal employment, gender roles.