

Work Life Balance of Female Teachers in Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract

Work-family conflict has become nightmare for most of the employees nowadays. Teaching profession is no more an exception. In particular, female teachers who are having kids to take care at home feel more troubled balancing responsibilities at workplace and responsibilities at home. Many researchers have established these facts on female teachers in primary or Secondary Schools. In order to examine if the same scenario exists in higher education institutions also, the study has been conducted on a sample of 501 female teachers from higher education Institutions. Results have indicated that female teachers in higher education Institutions also have experienced work-family conflicts. They have also faced stressful work conditions and feel disconnected from family due to extended work responsibilities. Particularly, female teachers working in private unaided colleges have been the major victims.

Keywords: Teachers, Higher Education, Work Family Conflict, Work Life Balance

Introduction

Work life balance signify the association or management between the expectations in personal life and demands at workplace. Most often, the balance is not achieved which leads to conflict. If the work pressures and responsibilities interfere with personal life of employees, it leads to work family conflict. On the other side, if an employee is unable to perform at work place due to family responsibilities, it is termed as family work conflict. Greenhaus and Buetell (1985) have rightly opined that people try to balance their roles at workplace and family, and when they fail to do so, it creates conflicts. Cinamon & Rich, (2005) believe that in traditional families, a woman is expected to take care of husband, children and even parents of husband many a times. This was primary reason for many women in traditional Indian families opting for teaching profession. Afful-Broni (2012) suggested a unique perspective that educational services are more like domestic chores performed at home by parents for their children. This is why female teachers are preferred in educational institutions. However, the scenario is now changing fast. Due to curricular and extra-curricular activities to be performed by teachers, the

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teaching job has now become quite draining and eventually female teachers are unable to spend quality time with their own kids (Thomas & O'Brien R., 1984). It has also been established by many researchers that work family conflict can lead to stressful situations for female teachers where they feel disconnected from the family and also have very poor level of job satisfaction (Maslach & Leiter, 2001).

Problem Definition

Although in Indian culture and family setups, the best profession outside home is believed to be teaching. The reason quoted for the same is that teaching takes less time and so it is best suited to females as they can take care of family responsibilities along with the job. However, with the increasing work pressure and responsibilities in teaching profession, females are now experiencing work-family conflict as suggested by many recent studies. This research is an attempt to examine work family conflict and family work conflict experienced by female teachers working in various higher education institutions.

Literature Review

Work life balance has been a burning topic in academic research in recent times. Women, in particular, have been the major victims of it. In India, however, it is assumed that women should prefer teaching profession as it can help them maintain work life balance and bringing up children simultaneously (Muthulakshmi, 2018). However this popular notion has been challenged by many authors. Soomro et al. (2018) examined the negative spillover of work on personal life of teachers. They found that teachers had to work for extra time in many private institutions and this caused them to spend lesser time with family and children. Pasamar & Valle Cabrera (2013) found that work-family imbalance acted as stress factor for female teachers who had to face serious conflict from their own family members because it was assumed that being teacher, females should spend more time with family. The researchers emphasized that for females, teaching profession and family or personal life are opposite factors to each other. Both have own expectations and demands. This conflict leads to the situation where both factors tend to pull females in two different directions, completely opposite to each other. Yadav & Dabhade (2014) analysed the case of female teachers who tend to work for extra hours, mostly to earn higher pay for some extra bonuses. However, their case was no different from other female teachers. These teachers could also spend less time with family members which strained their relationships with other family members.

Yadav & Dabhade (2014) also concluded that females in teaching profession could not Bond well with the family members due to work burden consuming more of their time. This even affected their performance at work also so as they could not prove to be effective team members. However, it is unfair to claim that family or personal life of female teachers are the only victims. Researchers have also found evidence that family responsibilities can also affect work performance of female teachers, popularly known as family work conflict. Nurmayanti et al. (2014) examined family work conflict in case of female teachers. They opined that females play multiple roles at home including responsibility as a wife, responsibility as a mother, and sometimes responsibility as a caretaker of elderly parents too. This causes a spillover in work life. These teachers could not perform well at teaching

institutes. Mohsin and Zahid (2012) also analyzed work performance of females and found that family responsibilities of females had negative impact on their performance at workplace. However, Al-Alawi (2016) concluded that in case of female teachers working in Bahrain, family responsibilities and concerns had lesser impact on performance at workplace. However, he did suggest that in case of females at leadership roles, these concerns could happen more serious. In another study by Al-Alawi et al. (2019), it was concluded that family responsibilities of female teachers and culture did not act as an obstacle in workplace.

In nutshell, it can be observed that work-family conflict is real for female teachers. Studies have suggested that female teachers working at various educational institutions did face a challenge of balancing work and family life which in turn could create bitterness in relationships with other family members. As for as family work conflict is concerned, the results are not conclusive. Some researchers have found significant impact of family responsibilities on work performance of female teachers, while some researchers did not find significant evidence suggesting family work conflict.

Objectives

The primary objective of this study has been to examine the level of work-family conflict and family work conflict which is often experienced by female teachers. Apart from this, the study also has an objective to compare work-family conflict and family work conflict by teachers belonging to various types of Institutes. Additionally, work-family conflict has also been compare for teachers appointed on permanent or temporary basis.

Scope of Research

The scope of this research has been limited to female teachers working in various higher education institutions located in Chandigarh, Panchkula and Mohali, popularly known as Chandigarh Tricity. This Geographic region has many degree colleges and professional colleges and University.

Sampling and Data Collection

A sample of 501 female teachers was selected using purposive sampling from various colleges located in the selected region. Structured and scaled questionnaire was designed as instrument of Data Collection. Responses were collected using Google forms.

Analytical Tools

Initially, frequencies and percentage were calculated for tabulation purposes. To generate summary of responses, weighted average mean and standard deviation were computed. Finally, to compare various groups of teachers, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used as test of significance.

Analysis and Interpretations

The scheme of analysis includes frequency tables covering responses of female teachers on work family conflict and family work conflict respectively. Thereafter, based on weightage assigned to responses i.e. 1 for strongly

disagree and 5 for strongly agree, average response has been computed. Lastly, analysis of variance has been used to compare weighted average response of work family conflict and family work conflict with regards to type of Institutions viz. Government, private aided and private unaided. Comparison has also been made based on the nature of appointment of teacher viz. permanent, contractual basis, and part time teachers. Results have been interpreted along with the tables as below.

Table 1 deals with assessment of work family conflict in case of female teachers involved in higher educational institutions. Five statements were used to assess the level of work family conflict among female teachers. It can be observed that about 32% of the respondents have shown agreement to the fact that they are unable to spend quality time with members of their family. 23% of the respondents have disagreed to it. Thereafter, 29% of the respondents agree that they are unable to do their household chores due to longer time span at workplace. 25% of the respondents however have disagreed to it. About 30% of the respondents agreed that their family members miss them due to their tight work schedules. 26% of the respondents feel that their work has negatively impacted their family life. More shockingly, 27% of the respondents believed that work pressures had turned them into irritating and short tempered personalities at home. In general, the table has suggested that about 25% of the respondents have agreed that they have experienced negative effects of work-family conflict. More than 40% of the respondents stayed neutral to each statement.

Table-1: Work Family Conflict among Female Teachers

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Due to work commitment, I am unable to spend quality time with my family members.	Count	62	57	226	118	38
	Row N %	12%	11%	45%	24%	8%
Because of long time spent for work, I am unable to do my household chores.	Count	33	90	233	115	30
	Row N %	7%	18%	47%	23%	6%
Members of my family often miss out because of my work schedules.	Count	31	94	226	120	30
	Row N %	6%	19%	45%	24%	6%
My work negatively impacts my family life.	Count	74	76	221	90	40
	Row N %	15%	15%	44%	18%	8%
Work pressures turn me in an irritating and short tempered personality at home.	Count	40	99	224	102	36
	Row N %	8%	20%	45%	20%	7%

Table 2 has covered various aspects and effects of family work conflict experienced by female teachers. 32% of the teachers believed that personal and family commitments did not impact work performance but 25% of the teachers have suffered from lower work performance. 24% of the teachers agreed to experiencing distractions at workplace due to pressure of family responsibilities. However, when it came to be a better teacher, had there been no family responsibilities, 34% of the teachers have clearly disagreed to it. Similarly, 36% of the teachers did not agree that their family life negatively impacts their work performance. In brief, it can be observed that although teachers believe that work family conflict exists and it has negative outcomes for their family life, very few teachers agree that family responsibilities can also have negative impact on their work life.

Table-2: Family Work Conflict among Female Teachers

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Due to personal and family commitments, my work performance suffers a lot.	Count	67	94	216	93	31
	Row N %	13%	19%	43%	19%	6%
I have distractions at workplace due to family related responsibilities and concerns.	Count	93	75	214	88	31
	Row N %	19%	15%	43%	18%	6%
I would have been a better teacher without family responsibilities.	Count	78	88	222	84	29
	Row N %	16%	18%	44%	17%	6%
My family life negatively impacts my work performance.	Count	99	80	206	84	32
	Row N %	20%	16%	41%	17%	6%
Due to personal and family commitments, my work performance suffers a lot.	Count	106	57	216	95	27
	Row N %	21%	11%	43%	19%	5%

Table 3 shows the summary of response to work-family conflict and family work conflict by female teachers. In both the cases, minimum response recorded was one and maximum response was five, corresponding to strongly disagree and strongly agree respectively. Average of work family conflict has been found to be 2.9988 and for family work conflict, it has been 2.7860. It shows that female teachers experience more of work family conflict and relatively lesser of family work conflict.

Table-3: Summary of Work Family Conflict and Family Work Conflict

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Average Work Family Conflict	501	1.00	5.00	2.9988	.89313
Average Family Work Conflict	501	1.00	5.00	2.7860	1.01700
Valid N (listwise)	501				

Table 4 deals with a comparison of various types of Institutions with regards to work family conflict and family work conflict. It can be seen that both the work-family conflict and family work conflict have been experienced more by female teachers working in private self-financing institutions which do not get any grant from government. Teachers working in Government and private aided institutions have experienced relatively lesser of work-family conflict and family work conflicts. In order to establish the statistical significance of this difference, analysis of variance has been used. F-value has been significant in case of work-family conflict and insignificant in case of family work conflict. It conveys that female teachers in private unaided institutions have experienced significantly higher level of work-family conflict. However in relation to family work conflict, the type of Institution did not matter and all the teachers have experience similar level.

Table-4: Type of Institution vis-à-vis Work Family Conflict and Family Work Conflict

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Average Work Family Conflict	Government	141	2.9206	.95075	4.991	.007*
	Private (Aided)	200	2.9080	.86095		
	Private (Unaided)	160	3.1813	.85761		
	Total	501	2.9988	.89313		
Average Family Work Conflict	Government	141	2.7702	1.02314	2.934	.054
	Private (Aided)	200	2.6770	1.03052		
	Private (Unaided)	160	2.9363	.98169		
	Total	501	2.7860	1.01700		

* Result is significant at 5% level of significance.

Table 5 deals with examination of work family conflict and family work conflict in relation to the nature of appointment of female teachers. It has been observed that work family conflict exists more in case of permanent and teachers working on contractual basis. Family work conflict has been experienced more by teachers working on ad-hoc/contractual basis as compared to teachers on permanent positions. Analysis of variance has been used to establish the statistical significance of the difference observed. F-value has been found to be insignificant in case of work-family conflict. But it has been significant in case of family work conflict.

Table-5: Nature of Appointment vis-à-vis Work Family Conflict and Family Work Conflict

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Average Work Family Conflict	Permanent	209	3.0115	.97006	.305	.737
	Ad-hoc/Contractual Basis	257	3.0039	.83263		
	Part Time/Guest Faculty	35	2.8857	.85994		
	Total	501	2.9988	.89313		
Average Family Work Conflict	Permanent	209	2.6507	1.12246	3.206	.041*
	Ad-hoc/Contractual Basis	257	2.8848	.90284		
	Part Time/Guest Faculty	35	2.8686	1.08242		
	Total	501	2.7860	1.01700		

* Result is significant at 5% level of significance.

It can be interpreted that permanent teachers have experienced lower level of family work conflict as compared to teachers working on part time or contractual basis. However work-family conflict has been experienced in similar levels by all the teachers.

Conclusion

The research has clearly highlighted that female teachers have experienced work-family conflicts. Although in Indian context, teaching was supposed to be a profession suitable for females as they could take care of their family responsibilities along with the job. But in recent times, nature of work has changed and eventually has become more stressful for female teachers. It has certain negative outcomes also like females becoming disconnected with family responsibilities and responsibilities of children. Hence, it may be the time for managements of Higher Education institutions to devise various techniques which may help balancing work and personal life for females. Family work conflict had not been that serious as per the findings. As final word, it can be said that following female teachers to strike a balance between work and personal life can lead to better job satisfaction and teachers will be in a position to be more committed towards students.

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