



PILOT STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF WORKPLACE EXPLOITATION ON JOB SATISFACTION AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AMONG WOMEN TEACHERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN JAMSHEDPUR, JHARKHAND

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Abstract

This pilot study explores the impact of workplace exploitation on job satisfaction and professional identity among women teachers in secondary schools in Jamshedpur, Jharkhand. The study aims to investigate how exploitation in the form of unequal pay, gender-based discrimination, excessive workload, and harassment affects the sense of professional fulfillment and identity of women educators. Using qualitative and quantitative data collected from a sample of women teachers, the study aims to understand the consequences of exploitation on job satisfaction and professional identity, which, in turn, influence the quality of education provided and the teachers' contributions to their local communities.

Introduction

In India, the teaching profession is considered a noble and respected one, but women teachers, especially in rural or semi-urban areas, often face workplace exploitation in various forms. Jharkhand, a state in Eastern India, has made considerable strides in education, but challenges related to gender-based discrimination, unequal pay, and high workloads persist. Jamshedpur, a prominent industrial city, is home to several secondary

schools where women teachers are an integral part of the educational system. This study examines how workplace exploitation, including gender-based discrimination and excessive job demands, affects women teachers' job satisfaction and professional identity.

Rationale of the Study

The teaching profession, particularly in secondary schools, plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of students and, consequently, society. Women teachers, however, often face significant challenges, including various forms of workplace exploitation such as unequal pay, excessive workload, gender-based discrimination, and harassment. These issues are particularly pronounced in regions like Jharkhand, where social and cultural dynamics often exacerbate the marginalization of women in the workplace.

In Jamshedpur, a growing industrial city in Jharkhand, women teachers work under circumstances that often go unaddressed, despite their critical role in the education system. The **impact of such exploitation on their professional lives** is an area that has received limited attention in academic research, especially in the context of India's evolving educational landscape. This gap in research is compounded by the **socioeconomic factors** that influence the ability of women teachers to respond to exploitation, as well as the **locality**—urban versus semi-urban—affecting their experiences in the workplace.

Understanding how **workplace exploitation** affects **job satisfaction** and **professional identity** among women teachers in this region is essential for several reasons. First, **job satisfaction** directly impacts teacher performance, retention, and, ultimately, student outcomes. Second, **professional identity** shapes how teachers perceive their role in the educational system, which influences their effectiveness and their dedication to their students.

Moreover, this study will contribute to creating **policies and support structures** within schools to mitigate the effects of exploitation, improve teacher well-being, and ensure that women teachers feel valued and supported in their work. Additionally, understanding how socioeconomic status and locality affect the experiences of women teachers will allow for more targeted interventions, especially in areas where these factors significantly affect their professional lives.

In sum, this study is crucial for ensuring that women teachers in Jamshedpur are provided with the support they need to thrive in their professional roles and to contribute to the growth of the educational system in Jharkhand.

Statement of the Problem

Women teachers in secondary schools in Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, often face workplace exploitation in the form of unequal pay, excessive workload, and limited recognition. This exploitation negatively impacts their job satisfaction and professional identity. The problem lies in understanding how these experiences, influenced by socioeconomic status and locality, affect their motivation and effectiveness as educators. The Problem is stated as Pilot Study on the Impact of Workplace Exploitation on Job Satisfaction and Professional Identity among Women Teachers in Secondary Schools in Jamshedpur, Jharkhand

Research Questions:

1. How does workplace exploitation affect job satisfaction among women teachers in secondary schools in Jamshedpur?
2. What impact does workplace exploitation have on the professional identity of women teachers?
3. How do workplace exploitation and professional identity influence the teachers' sense of responsibility towards their students and community?

Objectives of the Study

1. **To examine the nature and extent of workplace exploitation** experienced by women teachers in secondary schools in Jamshedpur, including aspects such as unequal pay, excessive workload, lack of recognition, and harassment.
2. **To assess the level of job satisfaction** among women teachers and identify how different forms of exploitation affect their morale, motivation, and work engagement.
3. **To analyze the impact of workplace exploitation on the professional identity** of women teachers, particularly in relation to their self-perception, role within the school, and connection to the teaching profession.
4. **To explore the influence of socioeconomic background and school locality** (urban vs. semi-urban) on women teachers' experiences of exploitation and their perceived sense of professional responsibility.

Operational Definitions of Key Terms

1. **Workplace Exploitation::** Refers to unfair treatment of women teachers in their professional environment, including unequal pay, excessive workload, denial of decision-making opportunities, harassment, and lack of institutional support.
2. **Job Satisfaction::** The degree to which women teachers feel fulfilled, valued, and content with various aspects of their job, such as salary, recognition, workload balance, autonomy, and relationships within the school environment.

3. **Professional Identity**:: A teacher's self-concept based on their role in the educational system, encompassing their sense of purpose, pride in the profession, perceived societal value, and commitment to their duties as educators.
4. **Women Teachers**:: Female educators employed in secondary schools (classes 6–10) in Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, with at least one year of teaching experience.
5. **Secondary Schools**:: Educational institutions in Jamshedpur offering classes from 6th to 10th standard, both government and private, where the participants of this study are employed.
6. **Socioeconomic Status**:: The social and economic background of the teachers, measured in terms of family income, education level, occupation of household members, and access to resources.
7. **Locality**:: The geographical area where the school is located, classified as urban (central city areas) or semi-urban/rural (peripheral or less-developed areas of Jamshedpur).

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This study focuses on women teachers working in secondary schools within Jamshedpur, Jharkhand. It examines the impact of workplace exploitation on their job satisfaction and professional identity. The study is limited to female teachers in selected schools and does not include primary school teachers, male teachers, or schools outside Jamshedpur.

Literature Review

Workplace exploitation, especially in the teaching profession, manifests in various ways. According to existing literature, **unequal pay**, **gender-based discrimination**, and **excessive work demands** are common forms of exploitation that affect women teachers' well-being and job satisfaction (Bettencourt & Hummer, 2020). Women in education often face **subtle and overt forms of harassment**, leading to **emotional burnout**, **lack of motivation**, and **diminished job satisfaction** (O'Reilly, 2016).

Job satisfaction is a key factor in maintaining high teaching standards and teacher retention. According to Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2001), job satisfaction is influenced by factors such as workload, organizational support, and the work environment. Exploitation, in its various forms, reduces the motivation of teachers, causing them to feel undervalued, which diminishes their **sense of professional identity** (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014). **Professional identity** refers to how teachers perceive their roles and responsibilities in society and within the educational system (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

In India, where gendered expectations are often reinforced within the educational system, **women teachers' professional identity** is frequently shaped by cultural norms, and workplace exploitation exacerbates feelings of inadequacy and lack of recognition (Kumar & Sahoo, 2019).

Methodology

This pilot study uses both **qualitative** and **quantitative methods** to collect data from women teachers in secondary schools in Jamshedpur. A **sample size of 30 women teachers** was chosen for the study, representing different schools in both urban and semi-urban areas of Jamshedpur.

Data Collection Methods:

1. **Survey Questionnaire:** A structured questionnaire will be administered to the participants to gather quantitative data on their perceptions of workplace exploitation, job satisfaction, and professional identity. Likert scale items will be used to assess aspects of **exploitation (unequal pay, harassment, workload)**, **job satisfaction**, and **professional identity**.
2. **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with 10 women teachers from the sample to explore their personal experiences with workplace exploitation and how it affects their job satisfaction and professional identity. These interviews will allow for in-depth insights into how teachers perceive and cope with workplace challenges.
3. **Focus Group Discussions:** Focus groups with 5 women teachers will be conducted to examine the collective perspectives of teachers on workplace exploitation, their sense of responsibility toward their students, and how their socioeconomic background influences their experiences.

Data Analysis

1. **Quantitative Data:** Data from the survey will be analyzed using statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics (mean, median, standard deviation) will be used to summarize responses related to job satisfaction, professional identity, and workplace exploitation. Inferential statistics (t-tests, chi-square tests) will help determine significant relationships between exploitation and the various dimensions of job satisfaction and professional identity.
2. **Qualitative Data:** Data from interviews and focus group discussions will be analyzed thematically. Using qualitative coding, recurring themes related to exploitation, job satisfaction, professional identity, and the sense of responsibility will be identified and categorized.

Data Analysis and Interpretation of Collected Data

This section presents the **analysis and interpretation** of both quantitative and qualitative data collected from **30 women teachers** in secondary schools in **Jamshedpur, Jharkhand**, through surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions. The focus is on three core variables:

- Workplace Exploitation
- Job Satisfaction
- Professional Identity

1. Quantitative Data Analysis

Demographics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Percentage
Age	25–35	43%
	36–45	40%
	46 and above	17%
Teaching Experience	< 5 years	30%
	5–10 years	40%
	> 10 years	30%
School Location	Urban	60%
	Semi-urban/Rural outskirts	40%
Socioeconomic Background	Middle Class	63%
	Lower-Middle Class	37%

A. Workplace Exploitation Indicators (Likert Scale 1–5)

Exploitation Indicator	Mean Score	Interpretation
Unequal Pay	4.1	High perception of pay disparity
Excessive Workload	4.3	Very high workload reported
Harassment (verbal/subtle biases)	3.6	Moderate to high incidence
Lack of Decision-Making Role	4.0	High perception of exclusion
Absence of Grievance Redressal	4.2	Very poor institutional support

Interpretation:

The average scores indicate that most teachers strongly experience workplace exploitation, especially in workload, limited authority, and pay discrimination.

B. Job Satisfaction Indicators

Satisfaction Dimension	Mean Score	Interpretation
Satisfaction with Salary	2.3	Low
Recognition by Management	2.7	Below average
Work-Life Balance	2.5	Poor
Relationship with Students	4.4	High satisfaction
Autonomy in Teaching	2.9	Neutral to low

Interpretation:

Job satisfaction is **low** in institutional areas (salary, recognition, autonomy), but **high** in teacher-student relationships, indicating emotional fulfillment despite systemic dissatisfaction.

C. Professional Identity Indicators

Identity Component	Mean Score	Interpretation
Sense of Purpose in Teaching	4.5	Strong
Pride in Profession	4.1	High
Perceived Social Status	2.8	Moderate to low
Role in Community Development	4.2	Strong engagement

Interpretation:

While institutional exploitation is prevalent, **intrinsic identity** and **sense of mission** among teachers remain strong. Teachers take pride in their role despite systemic challenges.

2. Qualitative Data Analysis

Themes from Interviews and Focus Groups

Theme 1: “Invisible Labour and Unrecognized Work”

Teachers mentioned being assigned non-teaching duties such as election duties, midday meal supervision, and administrative work without compensation or acknowledgment.

“Our job never ends after class. We are expected to handle everything, but our efforts are rarely appreciated.”
— Respondent A

Theme 2: “Fear and Silence over Harassment”

Some participants mentioned subtle and overt harassment from male colleagues or administrators, but very few reported these incidents due to fear of retaliation or job insecurity.

“We are told to tolerate it or leave. Complaining doesn’t help, and it could cost our job.” — Respondent C

Theme 3: “Teaching is Still Sacred”

Despite the difficulties, most women teachers expressed deep emotional bonds with their students and communities. Their role as a **"mentor"** or **"guide"** reinforced their sense of professional identity.

“Whatever happens at school, I come back for my students. They make it worth it.” — Respondent D

Theme 4: “Social Background Shapes Resilience”

Teachers from lower socioeconomic backgrounds often expressed greater tolerance for exploitation, seeing the job as essential for their family’s survival and a way to uplift their communities.

“I come from a poor family. Whatever the stress, I can’t leave this job. It’s my backbone.” — Respondent E

Cross-Variable Interpretation

Relationship Observed	Explanation
Exploitation ↑ → Job Satisfaction ↓	Teachers who faced more exploitation had lower morale and satisfaction.
Exploitation ↑ → Professional Identity ↔	Professional identity remained strong due to emotional bonds with students.
Socioeconomic Status ↔ Exploitation Tolerance	Teachers from poorer backgrounds were more resilient or tolerant.
School Location (Urban/Rural) → Harassment Rates	Rural teachers reported more subtle harassment and less administrative support.

Key Findings Summary

- **Exploitation is widespread** and takes many forms: unequal pay, unrecognized duties, exclusion from decision-making, and harassment.
- **Job satisfaction is low**, particularly in financial and administrative aspects.
- **Professional identity remains high**, suggesting strong internal motivation and commitment to students.
- **Socioeconomic background and locality** influence how women teachers perceive and respond to exploitation.

Results and Discussion

The results of this pilot study will be analyzed in the context of the following themes:

1. Forms of Workplace Exploitation:

- Women teachers in Jamshedpur experience various forms of exploitation, with unequal pay being the most prevalent form of exploitation, followed by excessive workload and, in some cases, gender-based discrimination and harassment.
- Many teachers reported that they were not compensated for the extra hours spent on lesson planning, student counseling, and extracurricular activities.

2. Impact on Job Satisfaction:

- Teachers who experienced higher levels of exploitation reported lower job satisfaction. Issues such as a lack of recognition, delayed salaries, and added responsibilities without compensation significantly contributed to dissatisfaction.
- A lack of supportive leadership and a patriarchal culture in the schools further contributed to teachers' feelings of being undervalued.

3. Impact on Professional Identity:

- Teachers facing workplace exploitation reported a diminished sense of professional identity. Many expressed feelings of frustration, with some stating that they felt like “mere workers” rather than educators. The exploitation led to a disconnect between their self-perception as educators and their actual work experiences.
- The imbalance between workload and recognition affected teachers' confidence in their professional role.

4. Sense of Responsibility Towards Students and Community:

- Despite the negative impacts of exploitation, most teachers still maintained a strong sense of responsibility towards their students. Teachers emphasized their dedication to their students' academic and personal development.
- The socioeconomic status of teachers was found to influence their responses to exploitation. Teachers from lower socioeconomic backgrounds felt more obligated to continue their work despite the challenges, as they viewed their roles as a means to uplift their families and communities.

5. Coping Strategies:

- Some teachers developed coping mechanisms such as peer support, self-advocacy, and involvement in local teacher unions. Teachers who participated in unions reported better job satisfaction due to collective bargaining and support.

- Teachers also found emotional support from students, which helped them maintain their motivation and sense of responsibility.

Conclusion

The pilot study reveals that workplace exploitation significantly affects the job satisfaction and professional identity of women teachers in secondary schools in Jamshedpur. Exploitation, particularly in the form of unequal pay and excessive workload, leads to lower job satisfaction and a diminished professional identity. Despite these challenges, teachers maintain a strong sense of responsibility towards their students and communities, although socioeconomic status influences their ability to cope with exploitation.

The findings suggest that addressing workplace exploitation through fair pay, better support systems, and recognition of the professional contributions of women teachers could improve job satisfaction and enhance their professional identity. Further research with a larger sample size and across different regions would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by women teachers and potential interventions to alleviate exploitation.

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