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Work Life Balance of Women Faculty in Professional Colleges of Kerala

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Abstract

Work life balance means proper prioritizing between career and personal life. A healthy work environment is very essential for a teacher to be productive and successful. Prior research points out that a women teacher struggles hard to strike the balance between being a caring homemaker and a responsible teacher. Hence there is a pertinent need to analyze and study the issues and factors associated with work life balance of women faculty. It is an inevitable requirement to compare and contrast the work life balance across educational institutions and bring to light any inadequacy of the initiatives taken by the authorities to achieve a healthy work life balance. Sample size of the study was 350, which included women faculty of professional colleges in Kerala under AICTE offering programmes under various disciplines. Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling was used. A pilot study was conducted and the final data collection was done in 2016. Structured Interview schedule was used for data collection. The analysis was conducted using chi-square test, ANOVA test, Regression analysis and Correlation analysis. The women faculty was found to have moderate satisfaction and moderate work life balance, relatively high in Engineering and pharmacy domain and least in Hotel Management domain.

Keywords: College Category, Domain, Personal Attributes, Professional Colleges, Women Faculty, Work Attributes.

1. Introduction

Work Life balance is when employees have control over when, where and how they work. A balanced life is one where employees are able to spread their energy, time and efforts in the emotional, intellectual, imaginative, spiritual & physical facets of life. Although the school of thought prevails that women prefer teaching profession because it gives a lot of room for prioritizing household responsibilities along with career demands, teaching profession is surely not a cakewalk. The fact is work life balance for teaching professionals has become one of the greatest challenges.

2. Statement of the Problem

A healthy work environment is very essential for a teaching professional to be productive and successful. Work life imbalance leads to poor performance, poor concentration, reduced efficacy

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levels and work family conflict; which could be detrimental to the health of the individual in the long run. Prior research points out that a women teacher struggles hard to strike the balance between being a caring homemaker and a responsible teacher. Hence there is a pertinent need to analyze, compare and contrast and study the issues and factors associated with work life balance of women faculty in professional colleges offering various courses in the discipline of Engineering, Architecture, Pharmacy, Management, MCA and Hotel Management. It is an inevitable requirement to compare and contrast the work life balance across educational institutions and bring to light any inadequacy of the initiatives taken by the authorities and colleges to achieve a healthy work life balance for women teachers in the chosen college category and disciplines.

3. Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the impact of college category on Family to work conflict, work to family conflict, job engagement, gender equality and relative easiness in dual role performance of women faculty of professional colleges in Kerala under AICTE.
2. To examine the impact of discipline on Family to work conflict, work to family conflict, job engagement, gender equality and relative easiness in dual role performance of women faculty of professional colleges in Kerala under AICTE.
3. To examine the type of role compromised for striking a balance between family and work life by women faculty of professional colleges in Kerala under AICTE with respect to college category.
4. To examine the type of role compromised for striking a balance between family and work life by women faculty of professional colleges in Kerala under AICTE with respect to discipline.
5. To examine the methods adopted for achieving work life balance of women teachers of professional colleges in Kerala.

4. Hypotheses

1. Family to work conflict, work to family conflict, job engagement, gender equality and relative easiness in dual role performance are negatively associated with the college category and the type of discipline.
2. The type of role compromised for striking a balance between family and work life is negatively associated with college category and type of discipline.

5. Variables

Work-life balance has been set up as the dependent variable the independent variables have been classified into three domains- personal, family and work related variables.

6. Research Design

Descriptive research design is employed in this study.

Pilot study

Pilot study advocated an interview schedule instead of questionnaire, for enhanced interaction with the respondents.

Pre-Test

A pre-test was conducted to determine whether the proposed tool, interview schedule, was appropriate.

Universe, Sample, Sample Size and Method of Sampling

Universe: The universe of the present study is the women teachers of professional colleges under AICTE in Kerala.

Sample: The sample includes a proportionate representation of women teachers who are married. The sample size includes 254 teachers from Engineering & Architecture, 81 teachers from MCA & MBA, 13 teachers from Pharmacy and 2 teachers from Hotel Management.

Sampling Technique: The respondents were selected on the basis of Proportionate Stratified random sampling.

Sampling Frame: The list available in AICTE website has been used to select the colleges to be considered for the purpose of the study.

Sample Size: The sample size for the study is 350.

7. Tools for Data Collection

Structured Interview Schedule is the tool used for the study.

Data Collection

Data collection was done during the months from January – November, 2016

8. Limitations of the Study

The findings of the study might depict variations when a state-wise study is conducted on the topic and is also subject to the drastic differences in the development of rural and urban areas in India. Respondents may not disclose truth about some family issues which might negatively influence their work life balance.

9. Data Analysis

Primary data was collected through interview schedule. The filled in schedule was edited and was subsequently coded and analyzed with SPSS software.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

1. Work Life Balance of Women Faculty with and without Young Children

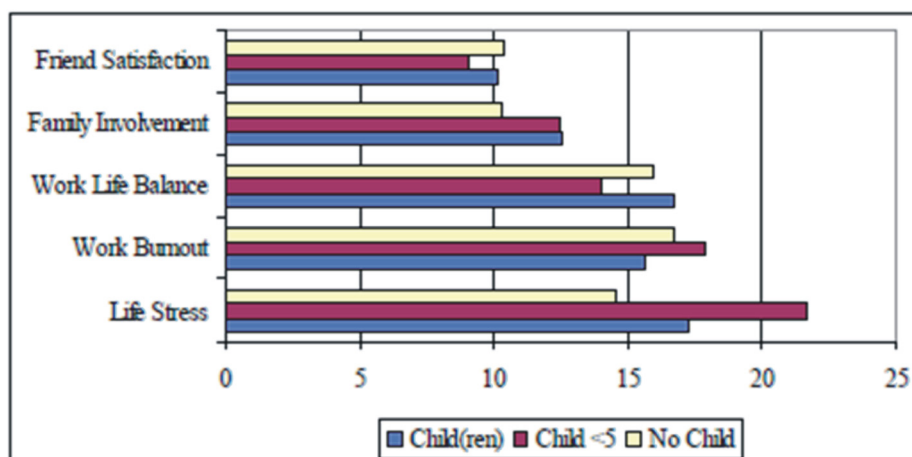


Figure 1: Difference in Life Attributes for Women Faculty with and without Young Children

Source: Primary Data

Work Life Balance of Women Faculty in Professional Colleges of Kerala

Inference: The analysis proves that life stress and work burn out is extremely high for women faculty with children below the age of 5. At the same time satisfaction derived from active social life and a balanced work life is disparagingly less for women teachers with children below 5 years.

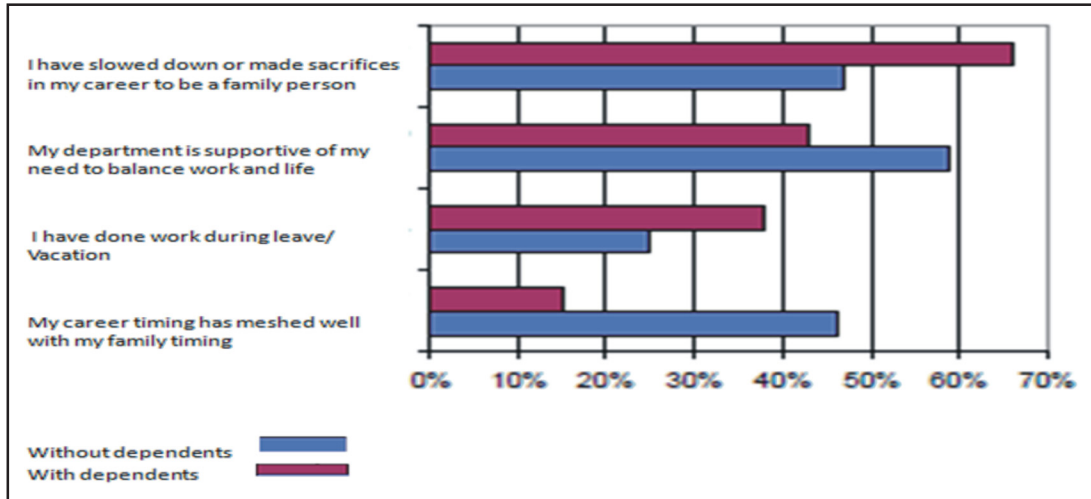


Figure 2: Family Orientation vs. Career Involvement for Women Faculty with and without Young Children
Source: Primary Data

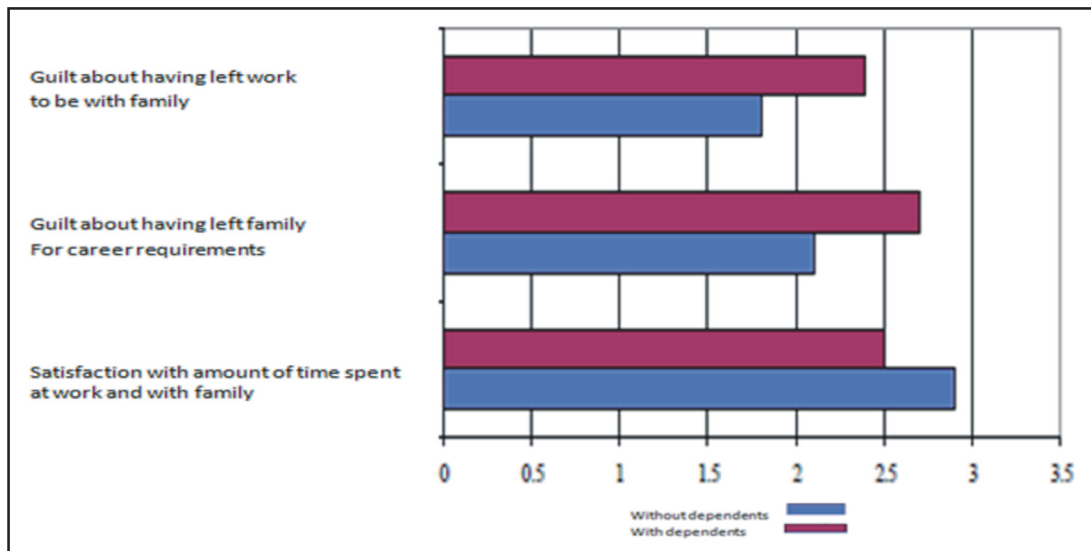


Figure 3: Satisfaction with Work and Family Needs Fulfillment

Inference: The findings suggest that women faculty with dependents face severe pangs of guilt for making compromises on career and family life.

2. Strategies to Meet Domestic Demands on Career

Table 1: Strategies Pursued to Meet Domestic Demands on Career

Strategies	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Informal Work	313	2.5788	.7066	3
Flexitime	228	2.1008	.6650	2
Part time Work	54	2.9063	1.5931	4
Compromise on Promotions/ assignments requiring more career time	328	1.1739	.6220	1
Career breaks	38	3.3321	1.6310	5

Source: Primary Data

Inference: It can be inferred that the most prominent strategy adopted by women teachers to meet domestic demands is compromising on opportunities available for career advancement. The arithmetic mean for this strategy is the lowest and the standard deviation is the minimum for this strategy. Therefore the coping strategy of Compromise on Promotions/ assignments requiring more career time is the most prominent and consistent strategy.

3. Strategies to Meet the Demands of Career on Family

The demands of career on family are usually met by revamping personal and professional patterns.

Table 2: Strategies Pursued to Meet the Demands of Career on Family

Strategies	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Family support	297	3.3054	1.4770	4
Maid Support	299	1.2508	.8656	1
Reliance on the Joint family system	21	4.3720	1.8286	5
Hobbies are compromised	101	2.7623	1.4791	3
Social Activities and Physical fitness regime are compromised	294	2.7553	1.0189	2

Source: Primary Data

Inference: The previous chapters of the study have proved that women professionals identify themselves with their familial responsibilities and reverse the traditional gender roles attached to woman. The above analysis clearly discloses the fact that most women teachers rank maid support as the best strategy to cope up with the demands of career on family. The mean is lowest for this strategy, which means it is the best preferred coping strategy.

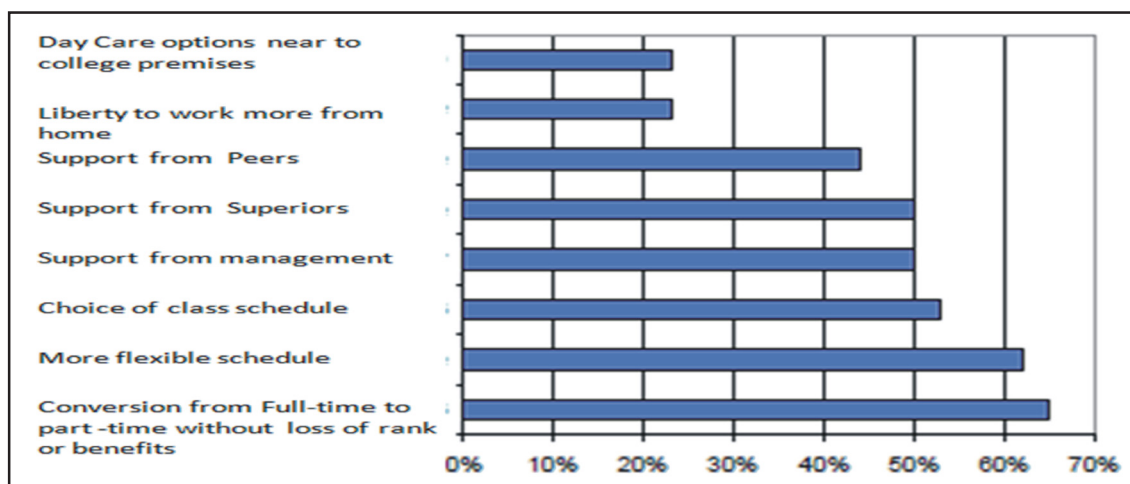


Figure 4: Preferred Work Place Support Systems

Source: Primary Data

Inference: The research findings suggests that women faculty find the option of conversion from full time to part time without loss of rank or benefits as the best solution to insure themselves from severe burn out and stress. Other options ranked the most include a more flexible work schedule, where the women teachers are given preference over male teachers, when it comes to choice of class timings; especially if they have children below the age of 5 or elderly parents who need special care and attention.

4. Impact of the College Category and Domain on Work Attributes and Personal Attributes

Table 3: Impact of the College Category on Work Attributes and Personal Attributes

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
FWC	Between Groups	.834	2	.417	.811	.445
	Within Groups	178.380	348	.514		
	Total	179.214	350			
WFC	Between Groups	3.816	2	1.908	5.572	.004
	Within Groups	118.751	348	.345		
	Total	122.969	350			
OC	Between Groups	68.460	2	34.230	71.896	.000
	Within Groups	165.208	348	.476		
	Total	233.669	350			
Priority	Between Groups	.748	2	.374	1.294	.275
	Within Groups	100.037	348	.289		

	Total	100.785	350			
Gendereq	Between Groups	2.470	2	1.235	4.583	.011
	Within Groups	93.221	348	.269		
	Total	95.691	350			
Familyor	Between Groups	2.568	2	1.284	2.687	.069
	Within Groups	165.800	348	.478		
	Total	168.369	350			
Jobeng	Between Groups	.091	2	.046	.047	.954
	Within Groups	338.266	348	.975		
	Total	338.357	350			
Dualrole	Between Groups	3.817	2	1.909	5.582	.004
	Within Groups	118.651	348	.342		
	Total	122.469	350			
Satisfaction	Between Groups	13.182	2	6.591	13.084	.000
	Within Groups	174.806	348	.504		
	Total	187.989	350			

Source: Primary Data

Inference: The above analysis indicates that the attributes; Work to family conflict, Organizational climate, gender equality, ease of dual role performance and satisfaction at work place is significantly different across college category. The organizational climate is significantly different across colleges. It is least favorable in self financing colleges, followed by Aided colleges and it is most favorable in government colleges. Similarly gender equality is most favorable in government colleges, followed by self financing and aided colleges. Priority attached to profession and family is insignificant across college category. Dual role performance is easier and satisfaction at work place is at its peak for women faculty of government colleges, followed by aided colleges and it is least favorable in self financing colleges. The results depict the pathetic state of teachers in self financing colleges. It is found that they are subjected to discrimination, the organizational climate is not suitable for work and performing the dual roles is tough due to unfavorable work environment. Thus the satisfaction level of women faculty in self financing colleges is dramatically reduced.

Table 4: Impact of the Domain on Work Attributes and Personal Attributes

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
WFC	Between Groups	8.812	3	2.937	5.965	.001
	Within Groups	170.402	347	.492		
	Total	179.214	350			
FWC	Between Groups	3.491	3	1.164	2.573	.054
	Within Groups	156.478	347	.452		
	Total	159.969	350			
OC	Between Groups	18.572	3	6.191	9.958	.000
	Within Groups	215.097	347	.622		
	Total	233.669	350			
Priority	Between Groups	.079	3	.026	.090	.965
	Within Groups	100.706	347	.292		
	Total	100.785	350			
Gendereq	Between Groups	5.574	3	1.858	7.113	.000
	Within Groups	90.117	347	.261		
	Total	95.691	350			
Dual Role	Between Groups	4.730	3	1.577	3.334	.020
	Within Groups	163.639	347	.473		
	Total	168.369	350			
Jobeng	Between Groups	24.982	3	8.327	9.194	.000
	Within Groups	313.375	347	.906		
	Total	338.357	350			
Family Orient	Between Groups	2.409	3	.803	2.314	.076
	Within Groups	120.060	347	.347		
	Total	122.469	350			
Satisfaction	Between Groups	12.029	3	4.010	7.884	.000
	Within Groups	175.960	347	.509		
	Total	187.989	350			

Source: Primary Data

Inference: The above analysis indicates that the attributes; Work to family Conflict, Organizational climate, gender equality, family Orientation, ease of dual role performance, Job engagement and satisfaction at work place is significantly different across the domain. Work to family conflict means spillover of work into family time. It is found to be highest in the case of Hotel Management discipline, moderate in the case of MBA, MCA and Pharmacy discipline and it is least in the case of Engineering discipline. The priority attached to profession and family is insignificant across different domain.

10. Results and Discussions

Work Life balance is about employees having measure of control over when, where and how employees work. Although the school of thought prevails that women prefer teaching profession because it gives a lot of room for prioritizing household responsibilities along with career demands, teaching profession is surely not a cakewalk. The study emphasized on examining how women faculty of professional colleges in Kerala organize their lives to perform their dual roles effectively and thereby achieve work life balance. The analysis proved that life stress and work burn out is extremely high for women faculty with children below the age of 5. The study also entails the various coping strategies adopted by women faculty to counter imbalances in professional and personal life. From the discussions made with the women teachers it was deduced that the two most common coping strategies adopted by them include problem focused strategies and prevention-focused coping strategies. The research findings with respect to work place support systems suggests that women faculty find the option of conversion from full time to part time without loss of rank or benefits as the best solution to insure themselves from severe burn out and stress.

In view of the existing scenario of women faculty in professional colleges, a number of germane issues must be considered in formulating and implementing appropriate strategies for making work places better for women faculty and reducing the instances of work burn out and life stress. Alleviating the conflict between work and family domains is a dire necessity and the concerned authorities must be urged to develop work-family programs and policies that aim at enhancing job flexibility and releasing domestic burdens of professional women. It is high time the management of the colleges and authorities responsible for policy formulations in professional colleges like the Human Rights Commission, AICTE, Directorate of Technical Education, Directorate of Collegiate Education and University Grants Commission; formulate and implement policies that ensure and enable increased participation of women in the teaching profession. Similarly the plight of women faculty in self financing colleges need special attention and the disparaging differences in the remuneration offered to faculty working in self financing colleges needs to be immediately monitored.

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