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WORK-LIFE BALANCE AMONG WOMEN FACULTY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT
Work-life balance is an important and widely discussed issue in the modern world, particularly for women employees. In the teaching profession, women faculty in first-grade colleges face significant challenges in balancing professional responsibilities and personal life. This study highlights the need for adopting effective work-life balance policies for women teachers at the degree college level.The research examines various dimensions of work-life balance, especially among women faculty working in government and private colleges, based on empirical evidence.Data for the study was collected from 40 women faculty members across academic and professional courses.The findings indicate that several factors influence their personal and professional lives, including workload, family responsibilities, and institutional support.Furthermore, the study identifies differences in personal priorities across demographic groups, which can serve as a basis for designing effective work-life balance policies.
KEYWORDS: *Work-Life Balance, First-Grade Colleges, Women Faculty, Family Issues, Professional Challenges, Institutional Policies.*

INTRODUCTION

The teaching profession plays a vital role in shaping future generations and contributing to societal development (Kumari & Devi, n.d.). In recent years, the concept of work-life balance has gained significant importance, particularly among women faculty in higher education. Women educators often face challenges in balancing professional responsibilities with personal and family commitments.
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In modern work environments, employees frequently work extended hours or flexible schedules, which reduces the time available for family and social life (Manjushree Jandan, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic further intensified these challenges, as women faculty transitioned from traditional classroom teaching to online modes, requiring them to adapt to new technologies and increased workloads (Mutulevicius, 2021).

To support the development of educational institutions in a globalized context, it is essential to adopt effective work-life balance policies, including improved working conditions, flexible schedules, and supportive institutional practices. Such policies can enhance employee motivation, satisfaction, and overall productivity (Ili´c-Kosanovi´c, 2021).

Traditionally, societal norms placed domestic responsibilities primarily on women. However, with changing economic and social conditions, women are increasingly participating in the workforce while still managing household responsibilities (Sunitha et al., 2022). This dual burden creates additional pressure on women faculty, affecting their professional growth and personal well-being. Compared to their male counterparts, women often face greater challenges in establishing their identity and career progression (Murthy & Shastri, 2015).

In the present scenario, educational institutions provide training and career development opportunities, encouraging greater participation of women in the workforce. However, worklife balance varies across individuals and depends on multiple factors such as workload, family expectations, and institutional support (Gassan Issa, 2020).

In the Indian context, work-life balance has become increasingly important due to social and cultural factors. Women often experience unequal distribution of domestic responsibilities and may face discrimination in professional settings. Poor work-life balance can lead to reduced productivity, stress, and decreased job satisfaction (Abioro, Colangelo, & Samogon, 2018). Achieving a balance between professional and personal life is therefore essential for overall well-being and effectiveness (Betaine, 2019).

This study aims to examine the work-life balance of women faculty in higher education by analyzing their professional challenges, personal responsibilities, and institutional support systems. Data has been collected through structured questionnaires and personal interviews to understand the impact of changing work environments and the policies adopted by institutions to support women faculty.

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Statement of the Problem

This study focuses on examining the work-life balance of women faculty in higher education institutions, including both government and private colleges. The primary objective is to understand the level of satisfaction among women faculty with respect to their professional responsibilities and personal lives. Maintaining a balance between these two domains is essential for achieving both job satisfaction and overall well-being.

In recent years, women faculty have been facing increasing challenges such as long working hours, commuting time, heavy academic workload, and family responsibilities. These factors often lead to stress, anxiety, and reduced time for personal care and household activities. As a result, managing both professional and personal roles has become increasingly difficult.

Traditionally, the division between work and family roles was more clearly defined. However, with changing social and economic conditions, women are actively participating in professional careers while continuing to manage domestic responsibilities. This dual role creates additional pressure, making work-life balance a complex issue for women faculty.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the extent of work engagement and personal life balance among women faculty, identify the key challenges they face, and understand how they manage these responsibilities effectively. The study also seeks to highlight the need for supportive institutional policies that can help women faculty maintain a better balance between their professional and personal lives.

Work-Life Balance Definition

Work-life balance is defined as the continuous effort made by individuals to maintain equilibrium between their professional and personal lives. It reflects how individuals manage their roles so that both domains remain compatible and contribute to overall well-being and personal growth (Kalliath & Brough, 2008).

One of the most widely accepted definitions of work-life balance is provided by Campbell Clark (2000), who defines it as "satisfaction and effective functioning at work and at home with minimal role conflict." This highlights the importance of achieving balance without compromising responsibilities in either domain.

In the context of women faculty in higher education, work-life balance is particularly significant as they manage dual roles in both academic and domestic settings. The concept also suggests that work should not be viewed as a burden but as an integral part of life that contributes to personal and professional development.

Work-Life Balance Among Women Faculty in Higher Education

Maintaining a positive work-life balance is essential for women faculty in higher education to achieve satisfaction in both their professional and personal lives. Work-life balance does not imply equal distribution of time between work and home; rather, it involves effectively managing responsibilities based on priorities and situational demands to enhance productivity and well-being.

In the teaching profession, especially at the higher education level, academic responsibilities have become increasingly demanding. Faculty members are required to engage in subject preparation, curriculum development, examinations, evaluation processes, and administrative duties. The shift from offline to online education after COVID-19 has further increased challenges, as it requires proficiency in ICT tools and digital platforms. In addition, responsibilities such as accreditation processes (NAAC), institutional activities, coordination roles, placement activities, and the use of academic systems like LMS and UUCMS add to the workload, often leading to stress and pressure.

At the personal level, women faculty are expected to manage multiple household responsibilities, including childcare, cooking, financial management, and caring for family members. Balancing these domestic duties alongside professional commitments becomes highly challenging and often results in psychological and emotional stress.

Therefore, there is a strong need for effective work-life balance policies and supportive practices within institutions, along with family support systems. Such measures can help women faculty manage their dual roles more efficiently, reduce stress, and improve their overall performance and well-being.

Review of Literature

- **Arunkumar (2019)** stated that job stress is prevalent in various institutions, including higher education. The study identified factors such as heavy teaching workload, syllabus changes, continuous working hours, and challenges related to e-teaching. It also highlighted the impact of job stress on work-life balance, career development, and family pressures.

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- **Marish Kumar (2019)** examined work-life balance as a process that enables employees to allocate time effectively between professional responsibilities and personal priorities such as family, health, and leisure. The study emphasized the importance of time management in maintaining balance.
- **Shiva Kami (2019)** identified several factors affecting work-life balance, including personal and professional challenges, work environment, long working hours, commuting difficulties, and health issues. The study noted that reduced time for family and social activities leads to increased stress among employees.
- **Sangeetha S. et al. (2020)** discussed the importance of job satisfaction in reducing employee turnover, particularly among women faculty. The study highlighted that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the shift from offline to online teaching increased workload and stress due to the use of digital tools such as virtual meetings and online platforms.
- **Yukta Kotwal (2019)** identified family-related and job-related factors as key determinants of work-life balance. The study emphasized the role of organizational policies such as flexible working hours, employee support systems, counseling services, and a supportive work environment in maintaining balance.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is limited to women faculty working in higher education institutions, including both government and private colleges. The study covers faculty members from various departments such as Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA), Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com), Bachelor of Science (B.Sc), and Bachelor of Arts (BA). The analysis focuses on understanding their work-life balance in relation to professional responsibilities and personal commitments during the academic period.The study also examines the impact of workload, institutional policies, and support systems on the overall well-being of women faculty. It considers the role of evolving teaching practices, including digital and online modes of instruction, in shaping work-life balance. Furthermore, the findings aim to provide insights for improving strategies and policies to support women faculty in higher education.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the work-life balance among women faculty in higher education.
- To identify the key factors affecting work-life balance and their impact on women faculty.
- To analyze existing institutional policies related to work-life balance.
- To provide suggestions for improving work-life balance among women faculty.

Hypotheses

- **H_0:** There is no significant difference in the opinions of women faculty regarding their job environment.
- **H_1:** There is a significant difference in the opinions of women faculty regarding their work-life balance.
- **H_2:** Women faculty are satisfied with their work-life balance in higher education institutions.

Factors of Work-Life Balance

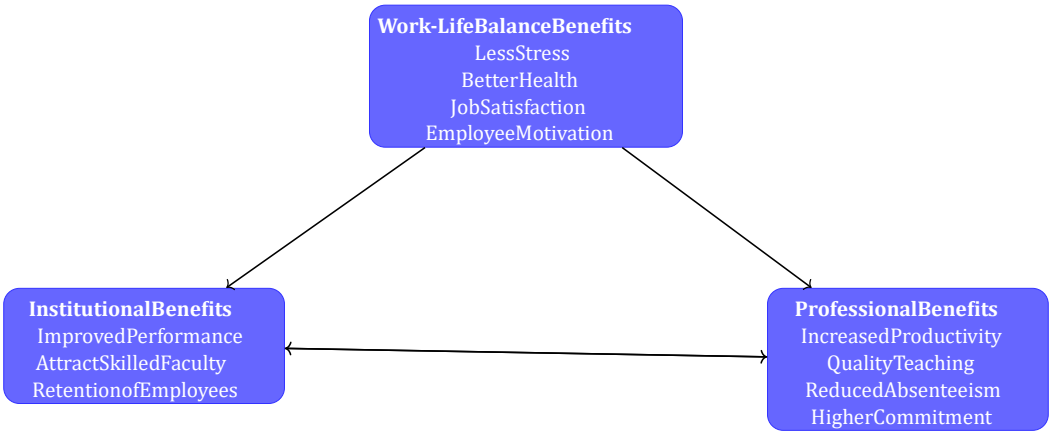
These are the major factors influencing work-life balance among women faculty in higher education, identified through the review of literature.These factors collectively influence the ability of women faculty to effectively manage their professional and personal responsibilities. Individual characteristics such as health and stress levels, along with societal expectations and family roles, play a crucial role in shaping work-life balance. Organizational support, including institutional policies and work environment, further determines the level of balance achieved. Understanding these factors is essential for developing effective strategies and policies to improve work-life balance in higher education.These factors are interrelated and vary across individuals depending on their personal and professional circumstances. A supportive environment can significantly reduce stress and enhance overall job satisfaction among women faculty. Therefore, a holistic approach is required to address these factors and ensure a sustainable work-life balance.

Individual Factors	Societal Factors	Organizational Factors	Other Factors
Personality, Spouse Support	Type of Family	Work-life Balance Policies	Job Role,Role Ambiguity
Well-being, Colleague Support	Marital Status	Organizational Support	Academic Development
Work Arrangements, Job Stress	Parental Status	Institutional Rules	Higher Studies
Role Conflict	Social Expectations	Committee Decisions	Social Status
Experience	Cultural Factors	Technical Facilities (ICT, LMS)	Career Growth

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Benefits of Work-Life Balance Among Women Faculty

Work-life balance offers several advantages for women faculty in higher education, contributing to improved well-being, enhanced job performance, and institutional growth. It helps in reducing stress, promoting better health, increasing job satisfaction, and improving overall productivity. The following diagram presents the key benefits. Furthermore, effective worklife balance contributes to better mental health and reduces burnout among women faculty. It also enhances their ability to manage multiple roles efficiently, leading to improved teaching quality and professional performance. In the long run, it supports employee retention and fosters a positive and productive institutional environment.



Methodology

The present study examines work-life balance among women faculty in higher education institutions. The research is based on data collected from women faculty working in both government and private colleges.

Type of Research: The study adopts a descriptive research design to analyze the work-life balance and related factors among women faculty.
Sampling Technique: Convenience and snowball sampling methods were used to select the respondents.
Sample Size: A total of 40 women faculty members were targeted for the study, out of which 36 valid responses were collected and used for data analysis.

Data Collection Methods

Primary Data

- Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires and personal interaction with women faculty.
- The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions designed to assess work-life balance and related factors.
- Responses were collected using options such as Agree, Disagree, and Sometimes.
- Demographic variables such as age, designation, salary, marital status, and number of children were included to obtain accurate and meaningful results. • Some questions were framed in a simple Yes/No format for clarity and ease of response.

Secondary Data

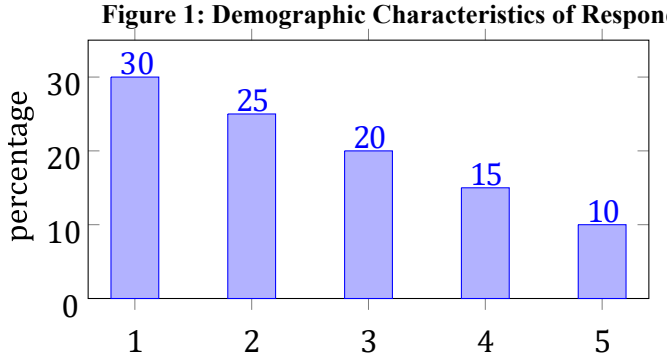
- Secondary data was collected from books, journals, research articles, periodicals, and reliable online sources.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
Above 26 years	12	30
26–30	10	25
30–34	8	20
34–38	6	15
Above 38 years	4	10
Total	40	100

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Figure 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

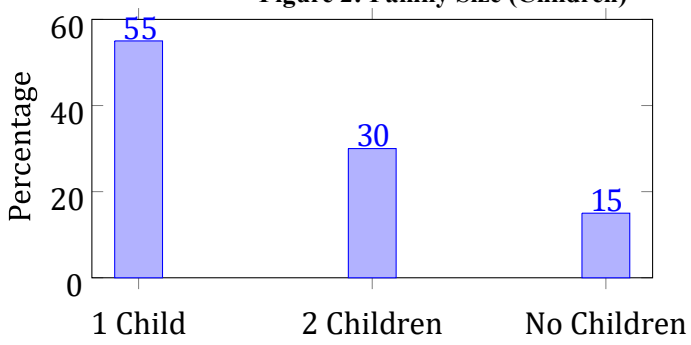


This research was conducted among women faculty in higher education institutions. It is observed that respondents in the age group above 26 years constitute 30%, while those above 38 years constitute 10% from the data. The observation reveals that the majority of respondents belong to the younger age group, indicating active participation of women faculty in higher education.

Table 2: Family Size (Children)

No of Children	Frequency	Percentage
1 Child	22	55
2 Children	12	30
No Children	6	15
Total	40	100

Figure 2: Family Size (Children)



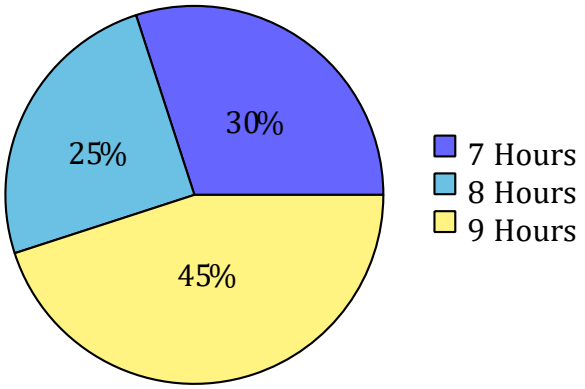
The above table and figure indicate that the majority of women faculty have one child, with 55% of respondents falling in this category. Around 30% of respondents have two children, while only 15% have no children. This shows that most women faculty in higher education are managing both professional responsibilities and family roles simultaneously.

Table 3: Working Hours per Day

Working Hours per Day	Frequency	Percentage
7 Hours	12	30
8 Hours	10	25
9 Hours	18	45
Total	40	100

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Figure 3: Working Hours per Day

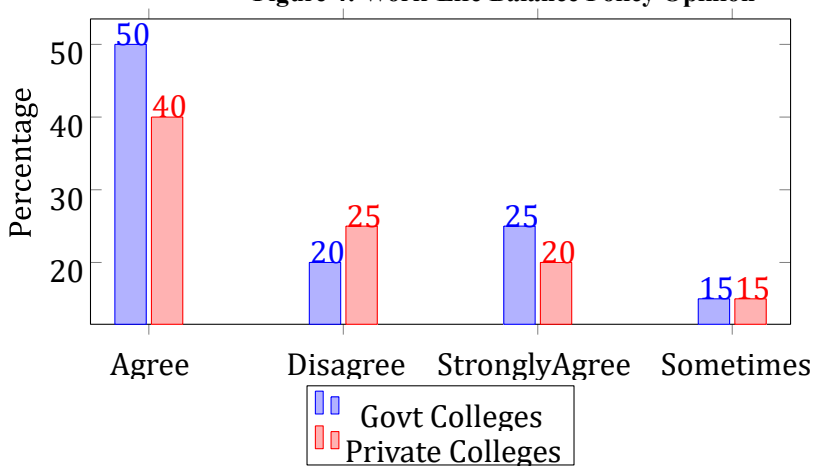


The above table and figure show that 45% of women faculty work for 9 hours per day, which represents the highest proportion. About 30% work for 7 hours, while 25% work for 8 hours per day. This indicates that a significant number of women faculty have extended working hours, which may affect their work-life balance.

Table 4: Work-Life Balance Policies and Satisfaction Among Women Faculty

Sl.No	Opinion	Govt Colleges	%	Private Colleges	%
1	Agree	10	50	8	40
2	Disagree	4	20	5	25
3	Strongly Agree	5	25	4	20
4	Sometimes	3	15	3	15
Total		20	100	20	100

Figure 4: Work-Life Balance Policy Opinion



The above table and figure indicate that a majority of women faculty agree that work-life balance policies help improve satisfaction. About 50% of respondents in government colleges and 40% in private colleges agreed with this statement. A smaller proportion expressed disagreement, while some respondents indicated neutral opinions. This suggests that institutional policies play a significant role in improving work-life balance.

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Table 5: Analysis of Opinion on Work-Life Balance

(SA - Strongly Agree, A - Agree, NA - Neutral, DA - Disagree, SDA - Strongly Disagree)

Statements	SA	A	NA	DA	SDA
Motivational Factors					
Personal Satisfaction	8	4	12	14	2
Financial Independence	10	12	14	3	1
Social Reputation	8	4	16	7	5
Personal Factors					
Health Issues	23	5	4	6	2
Family Support	8	6	3	22	1
Time with Family	21	8	4	4	3
Professional Factors					
Travelling Duration	16	17	2	3	2
Work Pressure	18	6	7	6	3

Table 6: Work-Life Balance Status Among Women Faculty

Response	No. of Respondents	%
Yes	12	30
No	28	70
Total	40	100

The above data indicates that 70% of women faculty are not able to maintain a proper balance between their personal and professional life, while only 30% reported achieving balance. This highlights the need for improved institutional support and effective work-life balance policies in higher education.

Factor Analysis

Previous literature suggests that factor analysis is one of the most suitable techniques for analyzing work-life balance among women faculty in higher education. The analysis focuses on various dimensions such as stress levels, challenges affecting work-life balance, job satisfaction, health issues, working environment, attitude towards work, and time management. These factors collectively influence the ability of women faculty to maintain a balance between their professional and personal lives.

Practices of Work-Life Balance in Higher Education Institutions

1. **Teaching Schedule:** Work-related issues such as extended teaching hours, additional academic responsibilities, weekend duties, and uneven workload distribution are common in higher education institutions. Long working hours and increased workload often create an imbalance between professional and personal life.
2. **Communication:** Effective communication plays a crucial role in the professional growth of women faculty. Proper communication between faculty and management improves work efficiency and ensures better understanding of institutional goals. Lack of communication can negatively affect performance and satisfaction levels.
3. **Career Development and Growth:** Institutions may not always guarantee longterm job security, but they can support faculty by providing opportunities for skill development, career advancement, and participation in decision-making processes. These factors contribute to improved work-life balance and job satisfaction.
4. **Organizational Commitment:** Studies (Steers, 1977; Walton, 1985) indicate that organizational commitment is positively related to employee performance and retention. Faculty members who are more committed to their institutions tend to show higher productivity and job satisfaction.
5. **Emotional Supervisory Support:** Emotional support from supervisors helps women faculty manage both professional and personal responsibilities effectively. It reduces stress and enhances energy levels, contributing to better work-life balance (Van Daalen et al., 2006).
6. **Flexible Work Arrangements:** Flexible working conditions, including flexible schedules and workload adjustments, help faculty manage their time efficiently. This improves motivation, reduces stress, and enhances overall performance.
7. **Family-Responsive Culture:** A supportive institutional culture that recognizes family responsibilities helps women faculty balance their roles effectively. Institutions that provide such support reduce employee stress and improve job satisfaction (Thompson & Lyness, 1999).
8. **Employee Motivation:** Work-life balance practices significantly influence employee motivation and performance. A positive work environment enhances satisfaction, productivity, and overall well-being (Davis & Cherns, 1975).

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Findings

- The study reveals that many women faculty face challenges due to lack of adequate institutional support and basic facilities. Most respondents expect improved working conditions and supportive policies from their institutions.
- Proper allocation of work based on experience and skills plays a significant role in improving work-life balance. Effective work-life balance practices enhance productivity, job satisfaction, and motivation among women faculty in higher education.

Recommendations

- Institutions should promote a healthy work-life balance among women faculty by encouraging regular breaks, wellness activities, and flexible working environments to reduce stress and improve productivity.
- Workload should be distributed fairly by balancing teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities. Equal allocation of academic and coordination duties can help reduce work pressure and improve efficiency.
- Institutions should provide adequate facilities such as restrooms, recreational spaces, and basic amenities. Organizing activities like indoor games, sports, and wellness programs can help women faculty reduce stress and maintain better mental health. • Regular interaction with counselors or psychologists should be arranged to assess stress levels among women faculty.

Scope for Further Research

The present study focuses on work-life balance among women faculty in higher education institutions. This research can be further extended by including women employees from administrative and non-teaching roles to obtain a broader perspective. Future studies can also include male faculty members to compare work-life balance across genders. In addition, the scope of the study can be expanded to cover various institutions across different regions to gain a more comprehensive understanding of work-life balance and stress management in the workplace.

Conclusion

The present study indicates that work-life balance among women faculty in higher education is influenced by several interrelated factors such as workload, time constraints, stress, commuting issues, family expectations, and lack of coordination between personal and professional responsibilities. These factors act as significant barriers in achieving an effective balance between work and personal life.

The analysis reveals that there is a variation in the opinions of women faculty regarding their work-life balance. Faculty members from different departments exhibit mixed perceptions towards their work environment, family responsibilities, and overall balance. Although many respondents express satisfaction with their work environment and family support, there is still a noticeable level of dissatisfaction with their work-life balance.

Therefore, it can be concluded that while women faculty are managing their professional and personal roles effectively to some extent, there is a need for improved institutional support, better policies, and effective strategies to enhance work-life balance in higher education institutions.

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