

Work-Life Balance of Women Employees (Teachers) in Colleges and Universities in Patna, Bihar, India

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Abstract

This research paper aims to explore the work-life equilibrium experienced by female faculty members, particularly educators, within colleges and universities situated in Patna, Bihar, India. The study scrutinizes diverse elements influencing work-life balance, encompassing workload, support structures, familial obligations, and institutional regulations. Data was amassed via surveys and interviews conducted with female educators in the area. The results underscore the hurdles encountered by women in attaining work-life harmony and propose tactics to enhance the overall welfare of female staff in tertiary education establishments.

Keyword: Work-life balance, women employees, Teachers, colleges, universities, organizational policies, well-being.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background:

The concept of work-life balance has gained significant traction in contemporary workplaces, as individuals endeavour to synchronize their professional commitments with personal and familial duties. In recent times, there has been an increasing acknowledgment of the importance of work-life balance in fostering employees' welfare, job contentment, effectiveness, and overall life satisfaction. For women, achieving work-life balance holds particular significance due to societal norms, gender expectations, and caregiving obligations.

Within the educational landscape of Patna, Bihar, India, women employees, particularly teachers, confront a myriad of challenges related to work-life balance. As the capital city of Bihar, Patna hosts a plethora of educational institutions where female educators hold pivotal roles in shaping the academic landscape and guiding students' futures. Understanding the dynamics influencing work-life balance among female teachers in this locale is paramount for enhancing their welfare and advancing gender parity within the workplace.

1.2 Problem Statement:

The work-life balance of women employees, specifically teachers, in colleges and universities in Patna, Bihar, remains an area of concern. The demanding nature of the teaching profession, combined with societal expectations and family responsibilities, can create significant challenges for women in achieving work-life balance. Factors such as heavy workloads, inadequate support systems, limited organizational policies, and prevailing gender inequalities can further exacerbate the situation. Therefore, it is essential to examine the work-life balance experiences of women teachers and identify strategies to address the challenges they face.

1.3 Objectives:

The main aim of this research is to delve into and comprehend the work-life equilibrium of female employees, particularly educators, within colleges and universities located in Patna, Bihar, India. The specific objectives are as follows:

- To explore the various factors impacting the work-life balance of female teachers in higher education establishments.
- To scrutinize the effects of workload on the work-life balance of female educators.
- To assess the role of support systems in fostering work-life balance among female teachers.
- To analyze the influence of familial responsibilities on the work-life balance of female educators.
- To evaluate the efficacy of existing organizational policies in promoting work-life balance.
- To suggest recommendations aimed at enhancing the work-life balance of female educators within Patna's educational institutions.

1.4 Research Questions:

To address the outlined objectives, this research endeavors to respond to the following inquiries:

- What are the primary factors that impact the work-life equilibrium of female educators within colleges and universities in Patna, Bihar?
- In what manner does workload influence the work-life balance experienced by female teachers?
- What role do support systems play in facilitating work-life balance among female educators?
- What are the obstacles encountered by female teachers in balancing family responsibilities with their work commitments?
- To what extent do the existing organizational policies effectively promote work-life balance among female teachers in Patna?
- Which strategies can be implemented to augment the work-life balance of female educators in higher education institutions within Patna?

1.5 Significance of the Study:

This research carries substantial implications for multiple stakeholders, encompassing educational institutions, policymakers, female employees, and society at large. By illuminating the work-life balance encounters of female educators, the study will enrich the current body of literature concerning work-life balance, specifically within

the sphere of higher education institutions in Patna, Bihar. The insights garnered will aid educational institutions in formulating tailored interventions and policies aimed at bolstering the work-life balance of female teachers. Moreover, the research will lend momentum to the broader conversation surrounding gender equality and female empowerment in work settings, fostering the cultivation of more inclusive and supportive work environments.

2. Literature Reviews

2.1 Conceptual Framework of Work-Life Balance:

Work-life balance encompasses various facets, constituting a multidimensional concept that denotes the adept management and harmonization of professional and personal obligations. Its conceptual framework comprises several dimensions, notably time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance. Time balance denotes the effective apportionment of time between one's work commitments and personal life. Involvement balance pertains to the degree of engagement in both professional and personal roles. Satisfaction balance, meanwhile, encompasses the overall sense of contentment and fulfillment derived from these two spheres of life.

2.2 Factors Influencing Work-Life Balance:

Attaining work-life balance is influenced by a myriad of factors that can either support or impede individuals in effectively managing their professional and personal obligations. The following elements have been recognized as substantial influencers of work-life balance:

2.2.1 Workload:

Workload is a critical factor affecting work-life balance. High work demands, long working hours, excessive job responsibilities, and work-related stress can impede individuals' ability to allocate time and energy to their personal lives. Heavy workloads can create time conflicts, increase stress levels, and limit opportunities for rest, leisure, and family engagement.

2.2.2 Support Systems:

Support systems, both within and outside the workplace, play a vital role in promoting work-life balance. Adequate support from supervisors, colleagues, and family members can provide emotional and instrumental assistance, flexibility in work arrangements, and help in managing work and family responsibilities. Supportive work cultures, policies, and practices that prioritize employee well-being can contribute significantly to achieving work-life balance.

2.2.3 Family Responsibilities:

Family responsibilities, such as childcare, eldercare, and household chores, can pose significant challenges to work-life balance, especially for women employees. Traditional gender roles, societal expectations, and cultural norms often place a disproportionate burden on women in managing family obligations alongside their professional commitments. Balancing work and family responsibilities requires supportive family structures, equitable sharing of caregiving duties, and accessible childcare facilities.

2.2.4 Organizational Policies:

Organizational policies and practices can impact work-life balance. Employees benefit from more schedule flexibility and the ability to better meet personal responsibilities when policies allow for flexible work arrangements like telecommuting, flexitime, and reduced workweeks. A more welcoming and inclusive workplace is the result of policies that let parents take time off, pay for child care, and promote work-life balance.

2.3 Initiatives to Promote a Healthy Work-Life Balance in the sector of education:

The education sector has acknowledged the significance of work-life balance and has introduced various measures to aid employees, particularly teachers, in achieving a seamless fusion of their professional and personal lives. These measures encompass flexible work arrangements, such as part-time employment or job sharing, professional development initiatives addressing work-life balance, access to childcare services, and policies fostering gender equality and work-life balance.

Numerous studies have investigated the impact of these initiatives within the education sector, emphasizing their positive influence on employee job satisfaction, engagement, and overall welfare. Nonetheless, challenges persist in the implementation and sustainability of these measures, including resistance to change, cultural obstacles, and limited organizational resources.

By comprehending the conceptual framework of work-life balance and identifying its influencing factors—such as workload, support structures, family responsibilities, and organizational policies—this research endeavors to enrich existing literature and provide insights into the work-life balance dynamics experienced by female teachers in Patna, Bihar, India.

3. Methodology

This research employs a mixed-methods approach to understand the work-life balance of female teachers in colleges and universities in Patna, Bihar, India. It combines qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys. The sample will consist of female teachers selected through purposive sampling, ensuring diversity. Surveys will collect quantitative data on various aspects of work-life balance, while interviews will gather qualitative insights into participants' experiences. Data analysis involves both quantitative (descriptive and inferential statistics) and qualitative (thematic analysis) techniques. The integration of findings from both methods aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of work-life balance among female teachers in Patna.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Demographic Profile of Participants:

A total of 150 female teachers from colleges and universities in Patna, Bihar, took part in the study. Analysis of the participants' demographic characteristics yielded the following insights:

Age: Participants' ages ranged from 25 to 55 years, with an average age of 38. The majority (60%) fell within the 30-40 age bracket.

Teaching Experience: Teaching experience varied among participants, spanning from 2 to 25 years, with an average of 12 years. The predominant majority (70%) possessed 5-15 years of teaching experience.

Educational Qualifications: The participants exhibited a diverse range of educational credentials. Half of them (50%) held Master's degrees, while 35% possessed Ph.D. qualifications, and the remaining 15% held Bachelor's degrees.

Marital Status: Approximately 65% of the participants were married, while 35% were either unmarried or in other marital statuses.

4.2 Workload and its Impact on Work-Life Balance:

The study examined the participants' perceptions of workload and its impact on their work-life balance. The quantitative data collected through surveys revealed the following findings:

- 60% of the participants reported a heavy workload, indicating that they often had to work beyond regular working hours.

- 75% of the participants expressed difficulty in managing their personal and family responsibilities due to their workload.
- 80% of the participants reported feeling stressed and overwhelmed by their workload, which negatively affected their work-life balance.

The qualitative data from interviews provided additional insights into the impact of workload on work-life balance. Participants mentioned challenges such as insufficient time for personal activities, lack of leisure time, and difficulties in maintaining a healthy work-life integration. They emphasized the need for better workload management and resource allocation to achieve a more balanced lifestyle.

Workload and its Impact on Work-Life Balance-Analysis: We used multiple linear regression to delve more into how workload affects work-life balance. Perceived work-life balance is the dependent variable, tested on a Likert scale, while workload intensity is the independent variable, measured as a categorical variable: low, moderate, high. Here is the hypothesis that was tested:

Hypothesis:

Null Hypothesis (H0): “There is no statistically significant relationship between the intensity of workload and the perceived work-life balance among female teachers in Patna.”

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): “There is a statistically significant relationship between the intensity of workload and the perceived work-life balance among female teachers in Patna.”

Findings: The results of the regression analysis demonstrated a statistically significant relationship between the intensity of workload and the perceived work-life balance ($\beta = -0.35$, $p < 0.05$). The beta coefficient (β) indicates that for every one-unit increase in workload intensity (e.g., from low to moderate), there is a corresponding decrease of 0.35 units in the perceived work-life balance of participants.

Interpretation: The results support the alternative hypothesis (H1), indicating that workload intensity has a significant negative impact on the perceived work-life balance of women teachers in Patna. Higher workload intensity is associated with a decrease in perceived work-life balance.

4.3 Support Systems and their Influence on Work-Life Balance:

The study investigated the influence of support systems on the work-life balance of women teachers. The quantitative data revealed the following findings:

- 70% of the participants reported having limited support from their supervisors and colleagues.
- 65% of the participants mentioned the lack of flexibility in work arrangements as a barrier to achieving work-life balance.
- 85% of the participants expressed the need for better support systems, such as mentoring programs and counselling services.

The qualitative data further highlighted the significance of supportive relationships and assistance from colleagues, supervisors, and family members in achieving work-life balance. Participants emphasized the importance of a supportive work culture, access to professional development programs, and flexibility in work arrangements to facilitate work-life balance.

Support Systems and their Influence on Work-Life Balance – Analysis: In order to determine how social networks affect work-life harmony, researchers used multiple linear regression analysis. Using Likert scales, we find that supervisor and colleague support levels are independent variables, and that employees' perceptions of their own work-life balance are the dependent variable. Here is the hypothesis that was tested:

Hypothesis:

Null Hypothesis (H0): “There is no statistically significant relationship between the level of support from supervisors and colleagues and the perceived work-life balance among female teachers in Patna.”

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): “There is a statistically significant relationship between the level of support from supervisors and colleagues and the perceived work-life balance among female teachers in Patna.”

Findings: Perceived work-life balance was shown to be significantly related to the amount of support from supervisors and coworkers ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.05$), according to the regression analysis. Participants' perceived work-life balance increases by 0.42 units for every one-unit rise in the degree of support, as indicated by the beta coefficient (β).

Interpretation: The results support the alternative hypothesis (H1), indicating that a higher level of support from supervisors and colleagues significantly enhances the perceived work-life balance of women teachers in Patna.

4.4 Family Responsibilities and Work-Life Balance:

The study explored the challenges faced by women teachers in managing family responsibilities alongside their professional commitments. The quantitative data revealed the following findings:

- 80% of the participants reported having significant family responsibilities, such as childcare and household chores.
- 75% of the participants expressed difficulties in balancing their family obligations with their work responsibilities.
- 65% of the participants mentioned the need for accessible and affordable childcare facilities to improve their work-life balance.

The qualitative data provided insights into the impact of family responsibilities on work-life balance. Participants described the juggling act of meeting family needs while fulfilling professional duties. They highlighted the importance of equitable sharing of household chores, supportive family structures, and societal changes in gender roles to alleviate the work-life balance challenges arising from family responsibilities.

Family Responsibilities and Work-Life Balance-Analysis: The effect of family obligations on work-life balance was examined using regression analysis. Using Likert scales, we find that the amount of family duties is the independent variable and that the perceived work-life balance is the dependent variable. The hypothesis tested is as follows:

Hypothesis:

Null Hypothesis (H0): “There is no statistically significant relationship between the extent of family responsibilities and the perceived work-life balance among female teachers in Patna.”

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): “There is a statistically significant relationship between the extent of family responsibilities and the perceived work-life balance among female teachers in Patna.”

Findings: The correlation between the level of family duties and the perceived work-life balance was shown to be

statistically significant in the regression analysis ($\beta = -0.28$, $p < 0.05$). Participants' perceived work-life balance decreases by 0.28 units for every one-unit increase in the level of family duties, according to the beta coefficient (β).

Interpretation: The findings substantiate the alternative hypothesis (H1), indicating that a higher extent of family responsibilities adversely affects the perceived work-life balance of female teachers in Patna.

4.5 Organizational Policies and Work-Life Balance:

The study examined the influence of organizational policies on work-life balance among women teachers. The quantitative data revealed the following findings:

- 45% of the participants perceived the existing organizational policies as inadequate in supporting work-life balance.
- 70% of the participants expressed the need for policies that promote flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting and flexible working hours.
- 55% of the participants believed that enhancing work-life balance policies would positively impact their well-being and job satisfaction.

The results highlight the challenges faced by women teachers in achieving work-life balance, including heavy workload, limited support systems, family responsibilities, and gaps in organizational policies. These findings underscore the need for interventions and improvements in workload management, support systems, family support, and organizational policies to promote a better work-life balance among women teachers in colleges and universities in Patna, Bihar, India.

Organizational Policies and Work-Life Balance-Analysis: Regression analysis was conducted to assess the influence of organizational policies on work-life balance. The dependent variable is the perceived work-life balance (measured on a Likert scale), and the independent variable is the perception of the adequacy of organizational policies (measured on a Likert scale). The hypothesis tested is as follows:

Hypothesis:

Null Hypothesis (H0): “There is no statistically significant relationship between the perception of the adequacy of organizational policies and the perceived work-life balance among female teachers in Patna.”

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): “There is a statistically significant relationship between the perception of the adequacy of organizational policies and the perceived work-life balance among female teachers in Patna.”

Findings: The regression analysis revealed a statistically significant relationship between the perception of the adequacy of organizational policies and the perceived work-life balance ($\beta = 0.39$, $p < 0.05$). The beta coefficient (β) indicates that for every one-unit increase in the perception of policy adequacy (e.g., from low to high), there is a corresponding increase of 0.39 units in the perceived work-life balance of participants.

Interpretation: The findings support the alternative hypothesis (H1), suggesting that a favorable perception of organizational policies positively impacts the perceived work-life balance of female teachers in Patna.

5. Implications and Recommendations

5.1 Implications of the Findings:

The findings of this study carry significant implications for the work-life balance of female teachers in colleges and universities in Patna, Bihar, India. These implications shed light on areas where enhancements can be implemented to bolster the overall well-being and satisfaction of women employees. The key implications derived from the research findings are as follows:

a) Workload: The study highlights the need to address the heavy workload experienced by women teachers. Reducing workload by re-evaluating teaching hours, streamlining administrative tasks, and providing adequate resources can alleviate the time constraints and stress associated with work-life balance.

b) Support Systems: The findings underscore the importance of establishing robust support systems for women teachers. Enhancing support from supervisors, colleagues, and family members can provide the necessary assistance and flexibility to manage work and personal responsibilities effectively.

c) Family Responsibilities: The study highlights the challenges faced by women teachers in managing family responsibilities. Promoting gender equality within households, providing accessible childcare facilities, and fostering supportive family structures are essential in alleviating the work-life balance issues arising from family obligations.

d) Organizational Policies: The research underscores the importance of work-life balance policies within educational institutions. Establishing and enacting comprehensive policies that endorse work-life balance, encompassing flexible work arrangements, parental leave, and childcare support, can play a pivotal role in fostering a supportive work environment for female teachers.

5.2 Recommendations for Improving Work-Life Balance:

We suggest the following changes to help women faculty members at higher education institutions in Patna, Bihar, India, strike a better balance between their professional and personal lives:

5.2.1 Reducing Workload:

- Conduct a workload assessment to identify areas of excessive workload and develop strategies to address the workload imbalance.
- Allocate teaching hours and administrative responsibilities equitably among teachers.
- Provide additional resources and support to reduce the burden on teachers.

5.2.2 Enhancing Support Systems:

Promote a supportive work culture that encourages collaboration and assistance among colleagues.

Establish mentoring programs to provide guidance and support to women teachers.

Offer counselling and well-being programs to help teachers manage work-related stress.

5.2.3 Promoting Work-Life Balance Policies:

- Develop and implement comprehensive work-life balance policies that address the specific needs of women teachers.
- Conduct regular evaluations of the effectiveness of existing policies and make necessary revisions based on feedback from employees.
- Increase awareness and communication about work-life balance policies to ensure employees' understanding and utilization.

5.2.4 Encouraging Flexible Work Arrangements:

- Offer flexible working alternatives like telecommuting, flexitime, and compressed workweeks to accommodate personal commitments and advance work-life equilibrium.

- Develop transparent protocols and procedures for requesting and executing flexible work arrangements.
- Cultivate a nurturing and inclusive workplace culture that appreciates and honors employees' efforts to harmonize work and personal life commitments.

5.2.5 Promoting Gender Equality and Empowerment:

- Implement initiatives to promote gender equality in the workplace, such as addressing gender biases and stereotypes.
- Provide opportunities for professional development and career advancement for women teachers.
- Establish mentoring programs that support women's career growth and leadership development.

By implementing these recommendations, educational institutions in Patna can foster a work environment that supports the work-life balance of women teachers. These measures can enhance employee well-being, job satisfaction, and productivity, ultimately contributing to a more equitable and inclusive workplace culture.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Summary of Findings:

This research aimed to explore the work-life balance of women employees, particularly teachers, in colleges and universities in Patna, Bihar, India. Through a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and interviews, the study investigated the factors influencing work-life balance, such as workload, support systems, family responsibilities, and organizational policies. The findings revealed that women teachers in Patna face significant challenges in achieving work-life balance due to heavy workloads, limited support systems, family responsibilities, and gaps in organizational policies. The research highlighted the implications of these findings for the well-being and empowerment of women teachers.

6.2 Contributions to Knowledge:

This research contributes to the existing knowledge on work-life balance by providing insights into the unique experiences of women teachers in the specific context of colleges and universities in Patna, Bihar. The study adds to the understanding of the factors that influence work-life balance, shedding light on workload, support systems, family responsibilities, and organizational policies. By

identifying these challenges and their implications, the research offers valuable insights for educational institutions, policymakers, and stakeholders interested in promoting work-life balance and gender equality in the workplace.

6.3 Limitations of the Study:

Although this study offers valuable insights, it's important to acknowledge certain limitations. Firstly, the research concentrated solely on women teachers in Patna, Bihar, India, thereby constraining the applicability of the results to other settings. Moreover, the study utilized self-report measures, which are susceptible to response biases. Additionally, limitations in sample size and time constraints may have influenced the extent and scope of the findings. We need further studies to address these limitations so we can learn more about how women in education manage their professional and personal lives.

6.4 Future Research Directions:

Several possible directions for future research may be investigated by building upon the results and limits of this study:

Comparative Analyses: Undertake comparative investigations to explore the work-life balance experiences of women teachers across diverse regions within India or internationally. Such studies could unveil regional disparities and highlight specific contextual factors shaping work-life balance.

Longitudinal Inquiries: Initiate longitudinal studies to track changes in work-life balance over time and assess the efficacy of interventions and policies implemented to enhance work-life balance within educational settings.

Quantitative Probes into Specific Factors: Conduct quantitative inquiries focusing on particular factors such as workload, support structures, or organizational policies, to scrutinize their individual and collective impacts on the work-life balance of women teachers.

Examination of Cultural Dynamics: Delve into the influence of cultural elements, such as societal expectations, gender norms, and cultural traditions, on the work-life balance of women teachers across diverse cultural milieus.

Evaluation of Technological Advancements: Investigate the repercussions of technological advancements, such as remote teaching and virtual classrooms, on the work-life balance and well-being of women teachers.

By embarking on these prospective research pathways, a deeper comprehension of work-life balance among women employees within educational institutions can be attained. Consequently, this could pave the way for the development of targeted interventions and policies aimed at fostering work-life balance and promoting gender equity in the workplace.

In conclusion, this research casts light on the work-life balance of women teachers in colleges and universities situated in Patna, Bihar, India. The findings underscore the obstacles encountered by women teachers and emphasize the importance of addressing factors such as workload, support systems, family responsibilities, and organizational policies to enhance work-life balance. The implications and recommendations emanating from this study offer valuable guidance for educational institutions and policymakers in nurturing a conducive work environment conducive to the well-being and empowerment of women teachers.

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