



## **WORK–LIFE BALANCE AMONG WOMEN TEACHERS: A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Work–life balance has become an increasingly important issue for women teachers as they are expected to manage professional responsibilities alongside family and domestic obligations. From a sociological perspective, work–life balance is influenced by social structures, gender roles, organizational culture, and institutional support. This study examines the work–life balance of women teachers by analyzing the interaction between their professional duties and personal lives. It explores factors such as workload, family responsibilities, occupational stress, job satisfaction, workplace flexibility, social expectations, and support systems that shape the experiences of women teachers. The study highlights that while teaching is often considered a family-friendly profession, women teachers continue to face significant challenges in balancing multiple roles due to traditional gender norms and unequal distribution of household responsibilities. The findings indicate that supportive institutional policies, flexible work arrangements, family support, and gender-sensitive organizational practices contribute significantly to improving work–life balance, professional effectiveness, and psychological well-being. The study concludes that achieving a healthy work–life balance is essential not only for the personal welfare of women teachers but also for enhancing teaching quality, organizational commitment, and educational development. It also recommends policy measures and institutional interventions to promote gender equality and sustainable professional growth among women teachers.

**KEYWORDS:** Work–Life Balance, Women Teachers, Sociology of Education, Gender Roles, Professional Responsibilities, Family Responsibilities, Occupational Stress, Job Satisfaction, Gender Equality, Teacher Well-being.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Work–life balance has emerged as one of the most significant issues in contemporary society, particularly for women professionals who are expected to manage multiple roles in both their personal and professional lives. Among various professions, teaching is often

considered suitable for women because it is perceived to offer flexible working hours and compatibility with family responsibilities. However, in reality, women teachers frequently encounter challenges in balancing their professional duties with household responsibilities, childcare, caregiving, and social obligations. This dual responsibility has made work–life balance an important area of sociological research. Women teachers play a crucial role in shaping the educational, social, and moral development of students while simultaneously contributing to the overall progress of society. They are responsible not only for classroom teaching but also for lesson planning, student assessment, administrative work, professional development activities, and participation in institutional programmes. Outside the workplace, many women continue to perform traditional family roles as mothers, wives, daughters, and caregivers. The coexistence of these multiple responsibilities often creates role conflict, time pressure, occupational stress, and challenges in maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal life.

Sociological theories provide useful frameworks for understanding these experiences. Structural Functionalism explains that education and family are important social institutions that perform complementary functions, while women teachers contribute significantly to both. Conflict Theory highlights inequalities in the distribution of power, resources, and opportunities, emphasizing how gender-based disparities influence women's professional lives. Feminist Theory focuses on the impact of patriarchy, gender discrimination, and unequal division of labour, arguing that women's work inside and outside the home should receive equal recognition and institutional support. Maintaining a healthy work–life balance is essential for improving teachers' physical and mental health, job satisfaction, professional effectiveness, and overall quality of life. Educational institutions that provide supportive leadership, flexible work policies, childcare facilities, professional counselling, and equal career opportunities can significantly enhance the well-being and productivity of women teachers.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Aim**

The primary aim of this study is to examine the work–life balance of women teachers from a sociological perspective by analyzing the factors that influence their professional responsibilities, family roles, and overall well-being.

### **Objectives**

- ❖ To examine the work–life balance of women teachers in educational institutions.
- ❖ To analyze the impact of professional responsibilities on the personal and family lives of women teachers.
- ❖ To study the influence of gender roles and societal expectations on the work–life balance of women teachers.
- ❖ To identify the challenges faced by women teachers in managing professional and domestic responsibilities.
- ❖ To assess the relationship between work–life balance and job satisfaction among women teachers.

- ❖ To examine the role of family support and institutional support in maintaining work–life balance.
- ❖ To analyze the impact of work–life balance on the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of women teachers.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of literature provides an understanding of the existing research on work–life balance, gender roles, occupational stress, and the professional experiences of women teachers. Previous studies indicate that women teachers make substantial contributions to the education sector while simultaneously managing family responsibilities. However, balancing these dual roles continues to be a significant sociological challenge influenced by cultural expectations, institutional policies, and gender norms.

**Greenhaus and Beutell (1985)** introduced the concept of work–family conflict and explained that incompatibility between professional and family responsibilities often results in role conflict, stress, and reduced job satisfaction. Their study remains one of the most influential frameworks for understanding work–life balance among working women, including teachers.

**Clark (2000)** proposed the Work–Family Border Theory, suggesting that individuals continuously negotiate the boundaries between work and family domains. According to the theory, supportive organizational environments and flexible work arrangements help employees achieve a healthier balance between professional and personal life.

**Hochschild (1989)**, in *The Second Shift*, argued that employed women frequently perform a disproportionate share of household and caregiving responsibilities after completing their professional work. This "second shift" creates physical and emotional strain and affects career progression and overall well-being. The study remains highly relevant in understanding the experiences of women teachers.

**UNESCO (2023)** highlighted that women represent a large proportion of the global teaching workforce but continue to face challenges related to workload, leadership opportunities, occupational stress, and balancing family responsibilities. The report emphasized the need for gender-responsive educational policies and supportive institutional environments.

**International Labour Organization (ILO, 2022)** reported that work–life balance significantly influences employee productivity, mental health, and organizational commitment. The report recommended flexible work policies, parental support measures, and equal employment opportunities to improve the professional well-being of women employees, including teachers.

**Naila Kabeer (1999)** emphasized that education and employment strengthen women's empowerment by increasing their access to resources, decision-making authority, and economic independence. However, she also noted that gender-based social expectations continue to influence women's ability to balance professional and domestic responsibilities.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research methodology to examine the work–life balance of women teachers from a sociological perspective. The study seeks to understand how professional responsibilities, family obligations, gender roles, and institutional

factors influence the ability of women teachers to maintain a healthy balance between their work and personal lives. A mixed-method approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods, has been employed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. Quantitative data facilitate the measurement of variables such as workload, job satisfaction, occupational stress, and work–life balance, while qualitative data provide deeper insights into the lived experiences, perceptions, and coping strategies of women teachers. The study is based on both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data are collected through structured questionnaires and personal interviews with women teachers employed in primary, secondary, higher secondary, and higher educational institutions. The questionnaire is designed to collect information regarding professional workload, family responsibilities, workplace support, occupational stress, job satisfaction, organizational policies, and the challenges encountered in balancing professional and personal life. Personal interviews help in understanding respondents' experiences and perceptions regarding work–life balance from a sociological viewpoint. Secondary data are collected from books, research journals, government publications, reports of UNESCO and the International Labour Organization (ILO), educational policy documents, and other scholarly sources related to sociology, gender studies, education, and work–life balance. Ethical standards are maintained throughout the research process by obtaining informed consent from all participants and ensuring confidentiality and anonymity of the information provided. Participation in the study is entirely voluntary, and the collected data are used exclusively for academic and research purposes.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Women teachers play a vital role in the educational system by contributing to the intellectual, social, and moral development of students. In addition to their professional responsibilities, they are often expected to fulfill multiple roles within their families and communities, including those of caregivers, mothers, wives, and homemakers. The simultaneous performance of these professional and domestic responsibilities creates significant challenges in maintaining an effective work–life balance. From a sociological perspective, these challenges are deeply influenced by gender roles, cultural expectations, family structures, organizational policies, and institutional practices. Although teaching is generally regarded as a profession that offers relatively stable working conditions, the responsibilities of women teachers have expanded considerably in recent years due to educational reforms, administrative duties, digital learning, continuous assessment, and professional development requirements. These increasing professional demands, combined with traditional household responsibilities, often result in work–family conflict, occupational stress, reduced personal time, and difficulties in maintaining physical and psychological well-being.

The problem is further intensified by prevailing social norms that continue to assign primary domestic responsibilities to women regardless of their employment status. Consequently, many women teachers experience role conflict, emotional stress, limited opportunities for career advancement, and challenges in participating in leadership and decision-making positions. The availability of institutional support, family cooperation, flexible

workplace policies, and gender-sensitive organizational practices significantly influences their ability to maintain a healthy balance between professional and personal life. Therefore, the present study seeks to examine the work–life balance of women teachers by analyzing the sociological factors that influence their professional responsibilities, family commitments, occupational stress, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. The study also aims to identify the major challenges affecting work–life balance and to suggest practical measures for improving institutional support, gender equality, and the quality of professional and personal life among women teachers.

### **NEED OF THE STUDY**

Work–life balance has become an important area of sociological and educational research because women teachers are expected to perform multiple responsibilities in both their professional and personal lives. As educators, they play a crucial role in shaping the intellectual, social, and moral development of students, while simultaneously fulfilling family responsibilities as mothers, wives, daughters, and caregivers. The increasing demands of the teaching profession, combined with traditional domestic expectations, have made it essential to examine how women teachers manage these dual roles and the impact of such responsibilities on their overall well-being. In recent years, the teaching profession has undergone significant changes due to educational reforms, digital learning technologies, administrative responsibilities, continuous assessment, and professional development requirements. These changes have increased the workload of teachers and have made balancing professional commitments with family life more challenging. Women teachers, in particular, often experience greater work–family conflict because social and cultural norms continue to assign primary household and caregiving responsibilities to women. Understanding these challenges is necessary for promoting gender equality and improving teachers' quality of life.

The study is needed because work–life imbalance can affect job satisfaction, mental and physical health, teaching effectiveness, professional commitment, and career advancement. High levels of occupational stress and inadequate balance between work and personal life may reduce productivity, increase burnout, and negatively influence the educational environment. A sociological analysis helps explain how gender roles, family structures, workplace culture, and institutional policies influence the daily experiences of women teachers and their ability to maintain a healthy balance. Furthermore, government initiatives promoting women's empowerment, gender equality, and quality education emphasize the importance of creating supportive working environments for women professionals.

### **FURTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR RESEARCH**

The present study provides a sociological understanding of the work–life balance of women teachers; however, there remains considerable scope for further research in this field. Future studies may examine the work–life balance of women teachers across different levels of education, including primary, secondary, higher secondary, higher education, and technical institutions, to identify variations in professional responsibilities, family commitments, and

organizational support. Comparative studies between women teachers employed in government and private educational institutions may also provide valuable insights into differences in workload, job satisfaction, workplace flexibility, and career advancement opportunities. Further research may explore the influence of rural and urban socio-cultural environments on the work–life balance of women teachers. Such studies can examine how family structures, community expectations, social support systems, and cultural values affect women's ability to balance their professional and personal responsibilities. Comparative studies across different regions, states, and countries would also contribute to a broader understanding of the impact of social and cultural diversity on work–life balance.

Future researchers may investigate the relationship between work–life balance and psychological well-being by focusing on occupational stress, burnout, emotional resilience, mental health, and job satisfaction among women teachers. Longitudinal studies that examine changes in work–life balance over different stages of a teacher's career would provide valuable evidence regarding the long-term effects of professional demands and family responsibilities. There is also a need for research on the impact of digital education, online teaching, artificial intelligence, and technological innovations on the work–life balance of women teachers. The increasing use of digital platforms has extended professional responsibilities beyond regular working hours, making it important to examine how technology influences workload, personal time, and family life.

## **SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS**

### **Scope of the Study**

The present study focuses on examining the work–life balance of women teachers from a sociological perspective. It explores how professional responsibilities, family obligations, gender roles, workplace culture, and societal expectations influence the ability of women teachers to maintain a balance between their work and personal lives. The study covers women teachers employed in primary, secondary, higher secondary, and higher educational institutions in both government and private sectors. It examines important aspects such as workload, occupational stress, job satisfaction, family support, institutional support, work–family conflict, career development, and psychological well-being. The research also analyzes the impact of educational policies, organizational practices, and changing social values on the professional and personal lives of women teachers. By applying sociological concepts and theories, the study aims to understand the interaction between work and family roles and to identify measures that can improve the quality of life and professional effectiveness of women teachers.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study is subject to certain limitations that should be considered while interpreting its findings. It is confined to a selected sample of women teachers; therefore, the results may not be fully generalizable to all educational institutions or geographical regions. The findings are based primarily on the responses of participants collected through questionnaires and interviews, which may be influenced by personal perceptions and response bias. Due to constraints of time, financial resources, and accessibility, the study may not include all

categories of educational institutions or all socio-cultural settings. The research focuses exclusively on women teachers and does not provide a comparative analysis with male teachers or other professional groups. Furthermore, the study concentrates on the sociological dimensions of work–life balance and does not examine in detail the economic, psychological, or medical aspects associated with occupational stress and well-being. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into the factors affecting the work–life balance of women teachers and offers a useful foundation for future research and policy development in the fields of sociology, education, and gender studies.

## **FINDINGS**

The findings of the study reveal that women teachers play a vital role in the education system while simultaneously managing multiple responsibilities within their families and communities. The study indicates that maintaining a healthy work–life balance remains a significant challenge due to the combined demands of professional duties and domestic responsibilities. Women teachers are expected to perform effectively in the classroom while also fulfilling traditional family roles, resulting in increased physical, emotional, and psychological pressure. The study finds that professional responsibilities such as lesson planning, classroom teaching, student evaluation, administrative work, co-curricular activities, and continuous professional development have considerably increased the workload of women teachers. The introduction of digital learning technologies and online teaching has further extended working hours beyond the classroom, making it more difficult to separate professional and personal life.

The findings also reveal that traditional gender roles continue to influence the work–life balance of women teachers. Most respondents reported that household management, childcare, elder care, and other family responsibilities remain primarily their responsibility despite being employed full-time. This unequal distribution of domestic work often results in work–family conflict, occupational stress, and limited personal time. The study further indicates that institutional support plays a significant role in maintaining work–life balance. Women teachers working in institutions that provide supportive leadership, flexible work arrangements, professional development opportunities, and gender-sensitive workplace policies report higher levels of job satisfaction, professional commitment, and overall well-being. Family support from spouses and other family members also contributes positively to balancing professional and personal responsibilities. Another important finding is that poor work–life balance negatively affects job satisfaction, mental health, physical well-being, and career advancement. Respondents experiencing high levels of occupational stress reported lower professional motivation, greater emotional exhaustion, and fewer opportunities for leadership and career development. Conversely, women teachers with effective work–life balance demonstrated higher productivity, better teaching performance, improved interpersonal relationships, and greater organizational commitment.

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## DISCUSSION

The findings of the study indicate that work–life balance is a critical factor influencing the professional effectiveness, personal well-being, and social status of women teachers. From a sociological perspective, the experiences of women teachers are shaped by the interaction of gender roles, family responsibilities, workplace expectations, and institutional support. Although women have achieved greater participation in the teaching profession, traditional social norms continue to assign them primary responsibility for household management and caregiving. As a result, women teachers often experience role conflict while attempting to meet both professional and family obligations. The study reveals that the teaching profession has become increasingly demanding due to educational reforms, curriculum changes, digital learning technologies, continuous assessment, administrative duties, and professional development requirements. These expanding responsibilities have increased the workload of women teachers and reduced the time available for personal and family life. The widespread use of online teaching and digital communication has further blurred the boundaries between work and home, making it difficult for many women teachers to achieve a satisfactory work–life balance.

The discussion also highlights that occupational stress and work–family conflict have a direct impact on job satisfaction, mental health, teaching effectiveness, and career progression. Women teachers who experience excessive workload and inadequate institutional support are more likely to report emotional exhaustion, reduced professional motivation, and limited participation in leadership roles. In contrast, respondents who receive family support, flexible working arrangements, and encouragement from educational institutions demonstrate higher levels of professional commitment, productivity, and overall well-being. From a sociological viewpoint, the findings support Feminist Theory, which argues that patriarchal social structures continue to influence the unequal distribution of domestic responsibilities and limit women's opportunities for professional advancement. The findings also support Conflict Theory, which explains that unequal access to organizational resources, leadership positions, and decision-making authority contributes to gender disparities within educational institutions. At the same time, Structural Functionalism recognizes that women teachers perform essential functions in both the family and educational systems, contributing significantly to social stability, value transmission, and human resource development. The study further demonstrates that institutional policies play a crucial role in improving work–life balance.

## CONCLUSION

The present study concludes that work–life balance is a crucial determinant of the professional effectiveness, personal well-being, and social development of women teachers. Women teachers perform a dual role by fulfilling their professional responsibilities in educational institutions while simultaneously managing household and family obligations. This dual responsibility makes maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal life both challenging and essential. From a sociological perspective, work–life balance is influenced by the interaction of gender norms, family structures, organizational culture, institutional support, and broader social expectations. The study reveals that although teaching is often regarded as a



profession suitable for women, increasing professional demands such as lesson preparation, student assessment, administrative duties, digital teaching, and continuous professional development have significantly expanded the workload of women teachers. When combined with traditional domestic responsibilities, these demands frequently result in work–family conflict, occupational stress, emotional exhaustion, and reduced opportunities for career advancement. Such challenges not only affect the personal well-being of women teachers but also influence their teaching effectiveness, professional commitment, and job satisfaction.

The findings further indicate that supportive institutional environments, flexible workplace policies, professional development opportunities, and positive organizational culture play an important role in improving work–life balance. Family support, shared domestic responsibilities, and changing societal attitudes toward gender equality also contribute significantly to reducing stress and enabling women teachers to achieve greater personal and professional satisfaction. Institutions that promote gender-sensitive policies and equal opportunities create conditions that enhance both teacher well-being and educational quality. The study also highlights that educational reforms, technological advancements, and women's empowerment initiatives have created new opportunities for professional growth while simultaneously increasing work-related expectations.

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