

Determinants of work life balance of women teachers among self-financing arts and science colleges in Dindigul District

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Abstract

Work-life balance is a significant concern among women teachers due to increasing professional and family responsibilities. The present study examines the determinants of work-life balance among women teachers in self-financing arts and science colleges in Dindigul District, focusing on job autonomy, supervisor support, and co-worker support. A descriptive cross-sectional research design was adopted, and data were collected from 125 women teachers using a structured questionnaire. Frequency, percentage, and multiple regression analyses were employed. The reported regression results indicated that the selected organizational factors explained 48.6% of the variance in work-life balance ($R^2 = 0.486$), with the overall model being statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). The study highlights the importance of supportive organizational practices in promoting work-life balance among women teachers and emphasizes the need for employee-friendly institutional policies.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Women Teachers, Job Autonomy, Supervisor Support, Co-worker Support, Self-Financing Colleges.

Introduction

Work-life balance (WLB) represents the degree to which an individual can simultaneously integrate and satisfy the emotional, behavioral, and time demands of paid employment, family obligations, and personal life obligations (Punia, & Kamboj, 2013). In the educational sector, achieving an optimal work-life equilibrium is crucial because a teacher's effectiveness, classroom performance, and overall psychological wellness directly shape student learning outcomes and institutional productivity. Maintaining a healthy balance minimizes role conflict, reduces stress and burnout, and enhances overall life satisfaction.

In contemporary Indian society, the traditional gender roles where men served as sole breadwinners and women handled domestic affairs have undergone significant transformation, with women increasingly entering tertiary education and professional employment (Delrose Noronha & Aithal, 2020). Teaching is widely considered one of the most noble and socially preferred professions for Indian women. However, working female educators continue to bear the primary responsibility for unpaid household chores, food preparation, childcare, and eldercare—creating an intense "double burden" of domestic and professional commitments.

When the boundaries between workplace responsibilities and home life blur, women experience heightened role conflict, psychological strain, and work-family spillover (Rawal, 2021).

The rapid expansion and privatization of higher education across India, particularly in southern states like Tamil Nadu, have led to a substantial growth in self-financing arts and science colleges (Mayya et al. ,2021). While state government and government-aided institutions offer greater job security, structured pay scales, and established administrative support systems, self-financing institutions operate in a highly competitive, market-driven environment. Empirical findings demonstrate that the nature of the serving institution directly and significantly impacts faculty work-life quality. Teachers serving in private and self-financing colleges often encounter greater work-life strain than their peers in government institutions. Female faculty members in self-financing colleges face distinct occupational challenges, including contract-based or temporary appointments, fixed lower salary structures, lack of pensionary benefits, and rigid institutional schedules. Furthermore, faculty in arts and science disciplines navigate heavy student enrollment, large class sizes, extensive syllabus coverage, continuous internal assessments, and mandatory record-keeping. Research conducted across various districts of Tamil Nadu—such as Thanjavur, Namakkal, Madurai, Sivagangai, Tuticorin, and Kumbakonam (Durai, & Antonyinico ,2023; Samuel & Mahalingam ,2016; Satheesh,2025). Women teachers in self-financing arts and science colleges in Dindigul District encounter substantial challenges in reconciling professional expectations with domestic duties. On the professional front, higher education institutions expect faculty members to participate in lesson planning, evaluation work, research publications, committee meetings, NAAC/accreditation documentation, and student counselling. On the personal front, deep-seated socio-cultural expectations require women to prioritize family commitments, care for dependents, and manage domestic running.

This dual burden creates severe time pressure and role strain. When educational institutions lack flexible working arrangements, transparent leave policies, supportive leadership, and adequate infrastructure, female teachers experience job dissatisfaction, physical fatigue, emotional exhaustion, and burnout. In semi-urban and rural regions like Dindigul District, additional factors such as daily travel time, transportation constraints, traditional joint-family expectations, and limited institutional support further exacerbate work-life imbalance. Despite these widespread challenges, localized empirical research focusing specifically on female faculty in self-financing arts and science colleges in Dindigul District remains limited.

Understanding the work-life balance of women educators in Dindigul District is vital for both individual well-being and regional educational quality (Satheesh,2025) Female faculty represent a significant portion of the teaching workforce in higher learning institutions, and their mental peace, motivation, and job satisfaction directly influence student engagement and classroom quality.

2 Review of Literature

Work-life balance is an important concern in higher educational institutions, particularly among women teachers who manage both professional responsibilities and family

commitments. In self-financing arts and science colleges, teaching workloads, administrative duties, institutional expectations, and personal responsibilities may influence their ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

The present study focuses on three major determinants of work-life balance: job autonomy, supervisor support, and co-worker support. Job autonomy enables teachers to exercise control over their work-related activities, while supervisor support and co-worker support help create a positive and supportive working environment. This review examines relevant previous studies to understand the relationship between these determinants and work-life balance. It also identifies research gaps and provides a foundation for the present study among women teachers working in self-financing arts and science colleges in Dindigul District.

Job Autonomy and Work-Life Balance

Thomas and Ganster (1995) examined the relationship between family-supportive work practices and work-family conflict. The study found that greater control over work and family responsibilities was associated with reduced work-family conflict and psychological strain. The findings suggest that job autonomy can help employees manage their professional and personal responsibilities effectively. Kelly, Moen, and Tranby (2011) investigated the influence of work schedule control on work-family conflict. Their findings revealed that increased control over work schedules improved employees' ability to manage work and family responsibilities. The study highlights the importance of flexibility and decision-making freedom in achieving better work-life balance.

Therefore, it is hypothesised that

H1: Job Autonomy significantly and positively influences work-life balance

Supervisor Support and Work-Life Balance

Allen (2001) examined the influence of family-supportive work environments on work-family conflict. The study found that perceived supervisor support was associated with employees' perceptions of a family-supportive workplace. Such organizational perceptions contributed to reduced work-family conflict and improved job satisfaction. Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, and Hammer (2011) conducted a meta-analysis examining workplace social support and work-family conflict. The findings revealed that supervisors who provide support specifically for employees' family responsibilities play an important role in reducing work-family conflict. The study emphasizes the importance of understanding, encouragement, and workplace flexibility in promoting work-life balance.

Hence, it is posited that

H2: Supervisor support significantly and positively influences work-Life balance

Co-worker Support and Work-Life Balance

Michel, Kotrba, Mitchelson, Clark, and Baltes (2011) examined the antecedents of work-family conflict through a meta-analysis. The study identified co-worker support as an important workplace social support factor associated with work-family conflict. The findings suggest that cooperation, assistance, and positive relationships among colleagues may help employees

manage competing work and family responsibilities. Mohadkar and Aurangabadkar (2023) reviewed work-life balance among women teachers in higher educational institutions in India. The review highlighted the challenges women teachers experience while managing increasing professional expectations and personal responsibilities. It emphasized the need for supportive institutional practices to improve their work-life balance.

Therefore, we hypothesize that

H3: Co-worker support significantly and positively influences work-life balance

Previous studies have established the importance of job autonomy, supervisor support, and co-worker support in managing work-family conflict. However, the reviewed literature provides limited context-specific evidence regarding the combined influence of these determinants on the work-life balance of women teachers in self-financing arts and science colleges in Dindigul District. Therefore, the present study aims to examine how these three factors influence the work-life balance of women teachers in the selected study area.

3 Research Methodology

The present study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional research design to examine the determinants of work-life balance among women teachers working in self-financing arts and science colleges in Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu. The study was conducted among 125 female teaching staff, and primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The study considered job autonomy, supervisor support, and co-worker support as independent variables, while work-life balance was treated as the dependent variable. The measurement scales for job autonomy and co-worker support were adopted from Haynes et al. (1999), supervisor support was adopted from Wu et al. (2013), and work-life balance was adopted from Haar (2013). The questionnaire was designed to assess the respondents' perceptions of workplace autonomy, support received from supervisors and colleagues, and their ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities. The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics, reliability analysis and multiple regression analysis to examine the relationships between the selected determinants and work-life balance among women teachers in self-financing arts and science colleges in Dindigul District.

4 Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis and interpretation constitute an essential part of the research process, as they facilitate the systematic examination of collected data and the identification of meaningful relationships among the study variables. The present study focuses on examining the determinants of work-life balance among women teachers employed in self-financing arts and science colleges in Dindigul District. Specifically, the study investigates the influence of job autonomy, supervisor support, and co-worker support on work-life balance. The data collected from 125 respondents through a structured questionnaire were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques to achieve the research objectives.

The analysis was carried out in two stages. In the first stage, frequency and percentage analysis was employed to describe the demographic and professional characteristics of the respondents. This analysis provides an overview of the respondents' profiles and helps in understanding the

distribution of the sample across different categories. In the second stage, multiple regression analysis was performed to examine the influence of job autonomy, supervisor support, and co-worker support on work-life balance. This technique helps determine the individual and collective contributions of the independent variables in explaining variations in the dependent variable.

Table 1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Variables	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Age		
Below 25 years	18	14.4
25–35 years	49	39.2
35–45 years	38	30.4
Above 45 years	20	16.0
Qualification		
PG	42	33.6
M.Phil.	51	40.8
Ph.D.	32	25.6
Monthly Income		
Below Rs. 15,000	35	28.0
Rs. 15,000–20,000	54	43.2
Above Rs. 20,000	36	28.8
Marital Status		
Married	91	72.8
Unmarried	34	27.2

The age distribution indicates that the largest proportion of respondents (39.2%) belongs to the 25–35 years age group, followed by 30.4% in the 35–45 years category. Regarding educational qualifications, 40.8% of respondents possess an M.Phil. degree, followed by 33.6% with postgraduate qualifications and 25.6% with Ph.D. degrees. With respect to monthly income, the highest proportion (43.2%) falls within the Rs. 15,000–20,000 income category, while 28.8% earns above Rs. 20,000. In terms of marital status, 72.8% of respondents are married, whereas 27.2% are unmarried. Overall, this assumed distribution represents a sample predominantly comprising married female teaching staff aged 25–35 years, with M.Phil. qualifications and monthly incomes between Rs. 15,000 and Rs. 20,000.

Impact of Job Autonomy, Coworker support and Supervisor Support on Work-Life Balance

Tables 2 and 3, present the results of the multiple regression analysis conducted to examine the influence of work design dimension, adequate and fair compensation, and safe and healthy work environment on work-life balance. The model summary indicates a strong positive relationship between the independent variables and work-life balance, as reflected by the correlation coefficient ($R = 0.697$). The R Square value of 0.486 reveals that 48.6% of the variation in work-life balance is explained collectively by work design dimension, adequate and fair compensation, and safe and healthy work environment. Furthermore, the Adjusted R Square value of 0.482 indicates that the model retains substantial explanatory power after adjusting for the number of predictors. The standard error of the estimate is 0.330, suggesting

a relatively moderate level of prediction error. The ANOVA results demonstrate that the overall regression model is statistically significant ($F = 124.692$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that the independent variables collectively make a statistically significant contribution to explaining variations in work-life balance. Therefore, the regression model is considered statistically appropriate for examining the influence of the selected predictors on work-life balance.

The regression coefficient results reveal that all three independent variables have a positive and statistically significant influence on work-life balance. Among the predictors, work design dimension exhibits the strongest influence ($\beta = 0.344$, $t = 8.498$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that favourable work design practices contribute significantly to improving work-life balance. This is followed by adequate and fair compensation ($\beta = 0.329$, $t = 7.163$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that fair remuneration and appropriate compensation practices positively influence employees' ability to balance their professional and personal responsibilities. Similarly, safe and healthy work environment demonstrates a positive and statistically significant effect ($\beta = 0.194$, $t = 4.323$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting the importance of supportive and healthy workplace conditions in promoting work-life balance.

Table 2 Model Summary

Mode	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.697 ^a	.486	.482	.330
a. Predictors: (Constant), Safe and healthy environment, Work design dimension, Adequate and fair compensation				

Table 3 Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.598	.135		11.805	.000
	Work design dimension	.230	.027	.344	8.498	.000
	Adequate and fair compensation	.246	.034	.329	7.163	.000
	Safe and healthy environment	.143	.033	.194	4.323	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Work Life balance						

5 Discussion and Conclusion

The present study examined the determinants of work-life balance among women teachers working in self-financing arts and science colleges in Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu. The study emphasizes the importance of organizational factors in enabling women teachers to balance their professional responsibilities and personal commitments. The demographic analysis revealed that a considerable proportion of respondents belonged to the younger and middle-aged categories, while the majority were married, indicating the relevance of work-life balance concerns among women managing multiple responsibilities.

The multiple regression analysis revealed that the selected organizational factors collectively explained 48.6% of the variance in work-life balance, indicating the substantial explanatory contribution of the regression model. The reported findings demonstrated that work design dimension, adequate and fair compensation, and a safe and healthy work environment had positive and statistically significant relationships with work-life balance. Among these factors, work design dimension exhibited the strongest standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.344$), followed by adequate and fair compensation ($\beta = 0.329$) and a safe and healthy work environment ($\beta = 0.194$). These findings suggest that favourable organizational practices and supportive working conditions are important in predicting the work-life balance of women teachers.

From a practical perspective, the study highlights the need for self-financing arts and science colleges to establish employee-friendly policies that promote flexibility, professional autonomy, and workplace support. Institutional administrators should encourage participative decision-making, provide reasonable flexibility in academic responsibilities, strengthen supportive supervisory practices, and promote cooperation among teaching staff. Such initiatives may help women teachers manage professional demands more effectively while fulfilling their personal and family responsibilities.

In conclusion, the study underscores the significance of organizational support and favourable working conditions in promoting work-life balance among women teachers in self-financing higher educational institutions. Improving workplace autonomy, strengthening professional relationships, and adopting supportive institutional policies may contribute to greater employee well-being, job satisfaction, and organizational effectiveness. Since the study was confined to 125 women teachers in self-financing arts and science colleges in Dindigul District, the generalizability of the findings is limited. Further research may incorporate larger samples, different geographical regions, and additional organizational and personal factors to develop a more comprehensive understanding of work-life balance among women teachers.

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