



Work–Family Conflict and Career Progression Among Women Academicians in Kozhikode City

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Abstract- This study investigates the relationship between work–family conflict and career progression among women academicians in Kozhikode City. Women in academia often face competing demands from professional and family roles, which may hinder their career development. A descriptive research design was employed, and data were collected from 150 women faculty members using a structured questionnaire. Percentage analysis and Chi-square tests were applied for statistical interpretation. The findings indicate that work–family conflict significantly affects productivity, leadership participation, and career satisfaction. Inadequate institutional support, particularly the absence of flexible working arrangements and childcare facilities, further intensifies these challenges. The study highlights the need for gender-sensitive organizational policies to promote work–life balance and enhance women’s career advancement in higher education.

Keywords- Work–family conflict, career progression, women academicians, institutional support, Kozhikode.

I. Introduction

The participation of women in higher education has increased substantially over recent decades. Despite this progress, women academicians continue to encounter barriers to career advancement, largely due to difficulties in balancing professional responsibilities with family commitments. Work–family conflict arises when pressures from work and family domains are incompatible, leading to stress and reduced performance. In academic settings, women are expected to manage teaching, research, administrative duties, and caregiving roles simultaneously. This study seeks to examine how work–family conflict influences career progression among women academicians in Kozhikode City.

II. Review of Literature

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) conceptualized work–family conflict as inter-role incompatibility that negatively affects job outcomes. Hochschild (1997) described the “second shift,” emphasizing the additional domestic labor undertaken by working women. Byron (2005) reported higher levels of work–family conflict among women due to disproportionate household responsibilities. Emslie and Hunt (2009) observed slower career advancement among women academicians resulting from limited research opportunities. Sang et al. (2015) highlighted the importance of institutional flexibility and support mechanisms in facilitating women’s academic careers. Indian studies further indicate that women faculty experience challenges related to workload, caregiving obligations, and insufficient organizational support, leading to restricted professional growth.



III. Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the extent of work–family conflict among women academicians.
2. To examine the impact of work–family conflict on career progression.
3. To analyze the role of institutional and family support in mitigating conflict.
4. To propose strategies to improve work–life balance.

IV. Research Methodology

A descriptive research design was adopted for this study. Primary data were collected from 150 women academicians in Kozhikode City using a structured questionnaire. Convenience sampling was employed. Secondary data were obtained from scholarly journals and published literature. Percentage analysis and Chi-square tests were used to analyze the data.

V. Results and Discussion

The findings reveal that the majority of respondents are early-career academicians who are married and have children, indicating substantial family responsibilities. More than half reported that professional demands interfere with family life and productivity. A significant proportion experienced difficulty participating in conferences due to family commitments. Many respondents avoided leadership roles owing to personal responsibilities, and more than half expressed dissatisfaction with their career progression.

Institutional support was found to be inadequate, with most respondents reporting limited access to flexible working arrangements and childcare facilities. Chi-square analysis confirmed a statistically significant relationship between work–family conflict and career progression, leading to rejection of the null hypothesis.

VI. Findings

The study establishes that work–family conflict significantly influences productivity, leadership participation, and career satisfaction among women academicians. Insufficient institutional support and lack of childcare facilities exacerbate stress levels. Although some respondents receive family support, many continue to face difficulties in managing professional and personal roles.

VII. Suggestions

Higher education institutions should implement flexible working policies and establish childcare facilities on campus. Workload allocation should be made more equitable, and mentoring programs for women faculty should be introduced. Administrative responsibilities may be minimized for women with young children. Families should be encouraged to share domestic responsibilities, and institutions should adopt gender-sensitive policies to promote women’s leadership and career development.



VIII. Conclusion

The study concludes that work–family conflict remains a significant barrier to career progression among women academicians in Kozhikode City. Family responsibilities combined with inadequate institutional support limit research engagement, leadership participation, and overall career satisfaction. Addressing these challenges through supportive organizational practices and policy reforms is essential for empowering women academicians and enhancing the quality of higher education.

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