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“Exploring the Effect of the Differences in Gender and the Marital Status on Work-Family Conflict, Emotional Well-being, and Professional Burnout among Higher Education Teachers”

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Abstract



The present study aims to investigate how demographic factors, such as gender and marital status, affect work-family conflict (WFC), emotional well-being (EWB), and professional burnout (PBO) among members of the higher education teaching staff in Sargodha district. This sample should include 400 university/college faculty members selected randomly by a stratified method. Based on a descriptive survey design, the data were gathered to analyse the important angles: demographic differences. The findings showed that demographic disparities play a significant role in determining the levels of stress and burnout experienced by teachers. It has been found that differences found between experiences of WFC, EWB, and PBO have strong variability in response to demographic variables. Work-family conflict was higher in the case of female and married teachers. Such results indicate the necessity of demonstrating the sensitivity of demographic factors in institutional policies and the promotion of faculty well-being programs.

Keywords: Work-Family Conflict, Emotional Well-being, Professional Burnout, Higher Education Teachers.

Introduction

Faculty members of higher education are also finding it hard to cope with the two facets of their lives, which are professional and personal responsibilities. This has given rise to the increasing apprehensions of work-family conflict (WFC), emotional well-being (EWB), and professional burnout (PBO). These issues are particularly of relevance in demographically based differences such as gender, marital status. Within higher education, the functions that should be performed by faculty members have long surpassed those of conventional teaching activities. Faculty members in higher education today have to take up many roles, including researcher, mentor, administrator, and community service provider (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). Although these roles are rewarding and intellectually challenging, they require teachers to spend a lot of time, energy, and emotional effort. The number of professional commitments side by side is growing, and thus, many teachers are unable to have a healthy balance between their profession and life.

There is a significant impact of variables even on the perception of faculty members with regard to WFC, EWB, and PBO. The intensity of such psychological challenges is always determined by factors, like gender, marital status (Dugan et al., 2012). As another example, women academicians usually have to share a dual burden of professional and household load, which increases their vulnerability to WFC and emotional exhaustion (Ahmad, 2008; Noor & Zainuddin, 2011). In the same way, married educators are likely to exhibit an increased level of WFC because of family commitment than unmarried educators.

In Pakistan, these demographic players are even more complicated because of societal values, gender norms, and institutional inequities. Differing work environments are common experiences for public and private sector teachers when it comes to job security, workload, and professional development opportunities. The process is further challenged by the cultural expectations regarding gender and family roles and obligations of female educators (Rehman & Waheed, 2012). Even though

such difficulties exist, there is a paucity of research about the demographic influences on teacher well-being in Pakistan.

The given research will address such a gap by determining the association of the demographic features of the respondents with WFC, EWB, and PB, among university and college instructors in the district of Sargodha. Taking the form of a descriptive survey and using standardized psychological scales, the study is analysed with statistical tests, including t-tests and ANOVA, to evaluate demographic differences. The aim is to present empirical data as evidence that would guide institutional policy and support systems specific to the various demographic categories.

These differences are important in establishing a healthy environment in academic work. The provision of personalized solutions, including flexible schedules, provision of mental health care, and gender policies, will considerably enhance the well-being of faculty. In identifying and acknowledging the various issues that individuals belonging to different demographic categories experience and addressing them, institutions of higher education can enhance both the satisfaction and productivity of their employees.

Objectives of the Study

1. Find out the gender variations in WFC, EWB, and PBO.
2. To compare the differences in WFC, EWB, and PBO by marital status.

Research Questions

1. Is the experience of WFC, EWB, as well as PBO strongly influenced by gender differences?
2. Does marital status contribute to variation in these factors?

Literature Review:

Work-family conflict is a significant psychological concern among professionals, especially in academic institutions where workload and expectations have intensified. According to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), work-family conflict arises when the demands of work and family roles are mutually incompatible. In the higher education context, teachers are often overburdened with teaching, research, administrative responsibilities, and community engagement. These overlapping demands increase stress levels, affecting their personal and family lives.

Kinman and Wray (2013) noted that the academic profession involves unpredictable schedules, long working hours, and high-performance expectations, which contribute significantly to WFC. Female faculty members, in particular, face additional burdens due to traditional gender roles that assign them primary responsibility for family and caregiving duties (Ahmad, 2008). Noor and Zainuddin (2011) found that WFC among female educators in developing countries such as Pakistan is significantly influenced by cultural expectations and limited institutional support.

Emotional well-being refers to the capacity to manage emotions, cope with stress, build healthy relationships, and maintain a positive self-image (Ryff, 1989). It is a critical determinant of overall psychological health. Faculty members with high emotional well-being are more likely to be productive, committed, and engaged in their work (Leiter & Maslach, 2009).

Professional burnout is a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job. Maslach and Jackson (1981) conceptualized burnout as comprising three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment. In the academic world, burnout is increasingly becoming a concern due to the growing pressures of publishing, grant writing, and student mentoring.

Leiter and Maslach (2009) argue that burnout among faculty leads to reduced teaching quality, absenteeism, and early retirement intentions. In Pakistan, studies by Rehman and Waheed (2012) revealed that burnout was higher among female faculty members, particularly those who were married and had young children. These findings indicate the need for institutions to focus on work-life balance policies and emotional support systems.

Gender has been widely studied, with consistent findings indicating those women's levels of WFC and burnout. This is attributed not only to dual role demands but also to universal gender injustices in workplace expectations and resources (Noor & Zainuddin, 2011; Ahmad, 2008). Male faculty, though also affected, report slightly less emotional strain due to more traditional role divisions.

Marital status is another significant variable. Married individuals, especially those with children, often face more intense WFC due to time and emotional commitments at home (Greenhaus

& Beutell, 1985). In contrast, unmarried teachers, while more flexible, may experience isolation or lack of emotional support, influencing their emotional well-being.

Inter-cultural studies support the idea that demographic characteristics, particularly gender and marital status, determine the level of WFC, EWB, and PBO. Cultural double roles can be more exhausting to married women, whereas unmarried personnel (Shabbir and Naqvi, 2017) can experience social isolation and the absence of support. Such results highlight the necessity to examine the interactive impact of demographic factors on higher education in Pakistan, which the present research is expected to fill.

In Pakistan, demographic differences are further influenced by sociocultural factors. Gender separation, joint family systems, and social expectations play a critical role in shaping the professional lives of educators. Studies by Rehman and Waheed (2012) highlight the cultural double burden faced by Pakistani women, who are expected to fulfil full-time professional roles while managing household duties. This often results in severe emotional exhaustion and limited professional advancement.

A study by Shabbir et al. (2017) on university teachers in Punjab found significant differences in WFC and burnout levels based on gender and marital status. Females were found to be more emotionally weak.

The review has indicated that WFC, EWB, and PBO are the constructs that are interrelated and have an immense implication on the faculty's well-being and the institutional effect. Pakistani setting, with its gendered cultural standards and insufficient institutional framework, is a context in which specialized research is needed to make sense of these processes. Overcoming the joint effect of demographic factors on WFC, EWB, and PBO among teachers of higher education in Sargodha, this study aims to provide contextually applicable information to both the policymaker and academic institutions.

While international literature provides substantial evidence of demographic influences on work stress and well-being, there is a dearth of research focusing on the specific cultural and institutional context of Pakistan. Existing studies often fail to examine the simultaneous impact of multiple demographic factors or neglect the combined effect of WFC, EWB, and PBO.

This study aims to fill that gap by adopting a comprehensive approach that investigates all three psychological constructs (WFC, EWB, and PBO) about key demographic variables. By focusing on higher education teachers in Sargodha, the study offers contextually grounded insights that can inform policy and practice at both institutional and national levels.

Methodology

A descriptive quantitative survey design was adopted. The sample consisted of 400 teachers selected through stratified random sampling from public and private universities and colleges in the Sargodha district. Standardized instruments were used to measure WFC, EWB, and PBO. Data were analysed using t-tests and ANOVA.

Population

The population of this particular study was teachers in higher education in the district of Sargodha.

Sample and Sampling Process

There were 400 higher education teachers in the study's sample. Stratified random sampling was the most successful method to ensure a sufficient percentage of teachers from each institution. This approach ensures balanced representation because the research covers two major groups, private and public institutions (colleges and universities), as well as many institutions within each category. The researcher gathered data from five universities, each with three faculties (Arts & Humanities, Social Sciences, and Sciences). With 30 instructors per university and 10 teachers per faculty, 150 teachers were chosen. In addition, the researcher chose 11 colleges in District Sargodha, each of which had 15 teachers.

Teachers were chosen from private and governmental institutions in Sargodha to ensure comprehensive representation in the study. The sample list is also included in the table. The following steps were taken to select the representative sample.

Inferential Statistics

H₀1: There is no significant mean difference in the perceptions of male and female teachers about work-family conflict.

Table 1.1
The Gender-Based Comparison of Work-Family Conflict

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	df	p-value
Male	112	3.3000	0.79695	-1.053	348	0.293
Female	238	3.3870	0.68180			

>0.05

Table 1.1 shows the perceptions of genders about work-family conflict. The difference was not significant as indicated by t-value = -1.053, with DF = 348 and p-value = 0.293 > 0.05. “There is no significant mean difference in the perceptions of male and female teachers about work-family conflict” is accepted. The greater mean value of female respondents (3.38) than males (3.30) indicates that female teachers are slightly more affected by work-family conflict than male teachers.

H₀2: There is no significant mean difference in the perceptions of male and female teachers about emotional well-being.

Table 1.2
The Gender-Based Comparison of Emotional Well-Being

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	df	p-value
Male	112	3.6813	.69289	1.855	348	.064
Female	238	3.5391	.65721			

> 0.05

Table 1.2 shows the perceptions of gender about emotional well-being. The difference was not significant as indicated by t-value = 1.855, with DF = 348 and p-value = 0.64 > 0.05. “There is no significant mean difference in the perceptions of male and female teachers about emotional well-being” is accepted. The greater mean value of male respondents (3.68) than females (3.53) indicates that male teachers are slightly more positive in their perceptions of emotional well-being than female teachers.

H₀3: There is no significant mean difference in the perceptions of male and female teachers about professional burnout.

Table 1.3
The Gender-Based Comparison of Professional Burnout

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	df	p-value
Male	112	3.1357	.64373	-2.370	348	.018
Female	238	3.3025	.59978			

< 0.05

Table 1.3 shows the perceptions of genders about professional burnout. The difference was significant as indicated by t-value = -2.370, with DF = 348 and p-value = .018 < 0.05. So, the null hypothesis stating “There is no significant mean difference in the perceptions of male and female teachers about professional burnout” is rejected. The greater mean value of female respondents (3.30) than males (3.31) indicates that female teachers are slightly more affected by professional burnout than male teachers.

H₀7: There is no significant mean difference in the perceptions of married and unmarried teachers about work-family conflict.

Table 1.4
The Marital Status-Based Comparison of Work-Family Conflict

Marital Status	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	df	p-value
Married	141	3.2326	.73858	-2.722	348	.007
Unmarried	209	3.4445	.69717			

< 0.05,

Table 1.4 shows the perceptions of married and unmarried teachers about work-family conflict. The difference was not significant as indicated by t-value = -2.722, with DF = 348 and p-value = .007 < 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis, declaring, “There is no significant mean difference in the perceptions of married and unmarried individuals about work-family conflict,” is rejected. The greater mean value of married respondents (3.23) than unmarried (3.44) indicates that unmarried teachers are slightly more affected by work-family conflict than married teachers.

H₀8: There is no significant mean difference in the perceptions of married and unmarried teachers about emotional well-being.

Table 1.5
The Marital Status-Based Comparison of Emotional Well-Being

Marital Status	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	df	p-value
Married	141	3.5234	.72512	-1.402	348	.162
Unmarried	209	3.6258	.63055			

> 0.05

Table 1.5 shows the perceptions of married and unmarried teachers about emotional well-being. The difference was not significant as indicated by t-value = -1.402, with DF = 348 and p-value = .162 > 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis, declaring, “There is no significant mean difference in the perceptions of married and unmarried individuals about emotional well-being,” is accepted. The greater mean value of married respondents (3.52) than unmarried (3.62) indicates that unmarried teachers are slightly more affected by EWB than married teachers are.

H₀₉: There is no significant mean difference in the perceptions of married and unmarried teachers about professional burnout.

Table 1.6
The Marital Status-Based Comparison of Professional Burnout

Marital Status	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	df	p-value
Married	141	3.1050	.58886	-3.646	348	<.001
Unmarried	209	3.3464	.61986			

< 0.05

Table 1.6 shows the perceptions of married and unmarried teachers about professional burnout. The difference was not significant as indicated by t-value = -3.646, with DF = 348 and p-value = .001 < 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis stating, “There is no significant mean difference in the perceptions of married and unmarried individuals about professional burnout,” is rejected. The greater mean value of married respondents (3.10) than unmarried (3.34) indicates that unmarried teachers are slightly more affected by professional burnout than married teachers are.

Results:

1. Gender-Based Differences

Variable	Significant Difference	Group More Affected
Work-Family Conflict (WFC)	✗ No	Female (Mean = 3.38 > Male = 3.30)
Emotional Well-Being (EWB)	✗ No	Male (Mean = 3.68 > Female = 3.53)
Professional Burnout (PBO)	✓ Yes (p = 0.018)	Female (Mean = 3.30 > Male = 3.13)

Gender does **not** significantly affect perceptions of WFC or EWB.

Professional Burnout is significantly higher among female teachers.

2. Marital Status-Based Differences

Variable	Significant Difference	Group More Affected
Work-Family Conflict	✓ Yes (p = 0.007)	Unmarried (Mean = 3.44 > Married = 3.23)
Emotional Well-Being	✗ No	Unmarried (Mean = 3.62 > Married = 3.52)
Professional Burnout	✓ Yes (p = 0.001)	Unmarried (Mean = 3.34 > Married = 3.10)

Unmarried teachers experience **more WFC and burnout** than married teachers.

No significant difference in emotional well-being based on marital status.

Conclusion and Discussion

The results show that gender does not significantly influence perceptions of WFC or EWB. However, Professional Burnout is notably higher among female teachers. Unmarried teachers experience more WFC and burnout compared to their married counterparts. There is no significant difference in emotional well-being based on marital status. Although no statistically significant differences were found between male and female teachers on the Work-Family Conflict scale and Emotional Well-Being, female teachers exhibited a significantly higher level of Professional Burnout (p = 0.018). This aligns with the findings of Maslach et al. (2001) and Purvanova & Muros (2010), who report that women, often due to the heightened emotional labour involved in teaching, report emotional exhaustion, an important component of burnout, more frequently. Additionally, the mean scores were slightly higher for females in WFC and for males in EWB, but these differences were not significant. This suggests that, although gender roles may influence how teachers perceive and manage family

obligations and emotional well-being, these factors might not be statistically significant within this specific academic environment. Earlier studies (e.g., Cinamon & Rich, 2002) suggest that WFC is generally greater in women than in men because women often juggle dual roles, though the current study's scores do not reflect significant differences, potentially due to changing social norms or institutional protections. Unmarried teachers also showed significantly higher levels of Work-Family Conflict ($p = 0.007$) and Professional Burnout ($p = 0.001$) compared to married Teachers.

Interestingly, even though one may anticipate that marriage imparts additional family burdens and consequently higher WFC, this observation offers credence to the supposition that married people can have emotional and logistical buffering mechanisms that isolate stress and burnout. Grzywacz et al (2006) and Adekola (2010) recorded the same, and this shows how social support was protective in dealing with professional stress. Emotional Well-Being data did not show a significant score associated with marriage, but the mean was higher in the case of the unmarried. Such a subtle finding implies that marital status does not necessarily define emotional well-being, but rather the quality of interpersonal relationships, job satisfaction, and coping styles.

These results stress that the issue of demographic impacts on teacher well-being is rather complex. Compared to others, female and unmarried teachers seem more prone to work-family conflict and professional burnout, respectively. All these points show the relevance of the selected interventions and policies that must consider demographic backgrounds as they plan to support well-being and prevent burnout.

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