

WORK ENVIRONMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG WOMEN TEACHERS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE COLLEGES IN RAMANATHAPURAM DISTRICT

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Abstract

Job satisfaction of female teachers is a crucial part of the quality of working life in HEIs because working conditions can affect job motivation, commitment and life experiences of teachers. The present study discusses work environment and job satisfaction among Women Teachers in Government and Private Colleges, Ramanathapuram District. The study is based on the primary data, which is collected from 350 women teachers among which 175 teachers from Government College and 175 from Private College. The physical, organisational and interpersonal aspects of the work environment were explored, as were the dimensions of job satisfaction relating to salary and benefits, job security, promotion opportunities, recognition, work-life balance and professional development. The analysis used were percentage analysis, mean, standard deviation, Pearson's correlation and independent sample's t-test. The results suggested that the overall rating for the perception of work environment was moderate. Furthermore, it is found that there is a positive and statistically significant correlation between work environment and job satisfaction. Apart from that, there were some differences in job satisfaction among the women teachers in Government and Private Colleges. The study emphasizes the need for supportive management, availability of good facilities for women teachers on campus, appreciation, career development and work-life balance in developing an enabling academic environment for the women teachers.

Keywords: *Women Teachers, Work Environment, Job Satisfaction, Government Colleges, Private Colleges, Higher Education, Ramanathapuram District.*

Introduction

Higher education institutions have a crucial role in Human Resource Development and teachers are a crucial resource in the realization of education objectives. An institution's effectiveness is not only based on the academic infrastructure and curriculum but also on the satisfaction, motivation and commitment of its teaching staff. Job satisfaction is the positive attitude or emotions that people feel towards their job and different facets of the job. Job satisfaction is related to aspects of the job in teaching: recognition, achievement, interpersonal, administration, salary, working conditions and opportunities for professional growth. Earlier studies have found both intrinsic and extrinsic factors relating to the teaching environment to be important in explaining satisfaction (Nias, 1981). The work environment is the physical, organisational and social setting in which employees work. It also involves provision of sufficient facilities, equipment, teaching-learning materials, workload, administrative support, relationships with fellow teachers, involvement in decision-making, opportunities for recognition and professional development in higher education. A positive working context can help teachers to have the resources and institutional backing they need to successfully carry out their duties. Higher education teachers' job satisfaction has been studied and workplace conditions, career development and organizational support have been found to be important factors (Devi, 2018).

Teachers of higher education make up an important part of the teaching profession, and women teachers may also be affected by having to allocate time between academic duties and family and personal duties. Work-life balance is thus an emerging aspect of women faculty's working experience. The study of the work-life balance of College and university teachers has revealed the differences between the two groups based on gender and the role of institutional and social support in managing work and life responsibilities (Mayya et al., 2021). Likewise, the subject of women faculty in India has also been explored which threw light on the work-life balance as an important factor in their professional experiences and employment outcomes (Jamunarani & Syed, 2024). Teachers' satisfaction can also differ based on the kind of institution where they work. The differences between Government and Private Colleges can be in their administrative structure, employment terms, job security, salary and benefits, workload, promotion opportunities and professional development practices. These differences can have a bearing on the teachers' perception of what they do and thus influence their job satisfaction. Studies conducted in the past on job satisfaction of faculty members in Indian higher education institutions have explored the relationship between job satisfaction and the characteristics of institutions and workplaces and suggest that job satisfaction varies according to different environment of employment (Krishna, 2015).

A work environment and job satisfaction relationship is thus an important research topic in higher education. The environment that teachers feel is supportive, safe, respectful and conducive to professional development might lead to higher job satisfaction. Other factors, however, can have a negative impact on job satisfaction if they are present in excess such as workload, inadequate facilities, limited recognition, career opportunities and a lack of administrative support. The two-factor theory also classifies the factors into intrinsic and extrinsic factors that are related to the nature of the work itself (achievement, recognition) and contextual factors (organisational policy, supervision, salary, working conditions) (Herzberg et al., 1959). The present study has been carried on the school-going girls who are employed as teachers in the Government and Private Colleges in Ramanathapuram district. Though there have been some studies on teacher job satisfaction, work environment, and work-life balance in various educational contexts, comparatively few studies have focused on women College teachers in a district level, especially when comparing and contrasting Government College teachers with the Private College teachers. The present study, thus, examines the perceived work environment of women teachers, assesses their level of job satisfaction, analyses the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction and compares job satisfaction between Government and Private College teachers in Ramanathapuram District. The results are hoped to offer helpful knowledge to educational administrators on creating supportive workplace practices and to enhance the professional experience of women teachers.

Review of Literature

Job satisfaction has been acknowledged as an important factor in the study of teachers' working life experiences in higher education. Tahir & Sajid (2019) conducted a study on job satisfaction of Indian academicians and pointed out that the institutional policies, training and managerial support have a significant role in enhancing faculty motivation, commitment and satisfaction. They found in their study of 350 faculty members at higher education institutions that academic job satisfaction is a multidimensional construct, and there is a need for systematic assessment of faculty satisfaction. Devi (2018) conducted a study on role performance and job satisfaction of teachers in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of Vellore District in Tamilnadu. The research pinpointed the dimensions of work environment and career development that had a significant relationship to job satisfaction. The safety of the work environment and relationship with supervisor and co-workers, challenging work, training and

career development were more salient. The study further found that there were institutional typology differences in management relationships, meaning that this is an important factor in explaining teachers' satisfaction.

Krishna (2015) explored gender difference in job satisfaction for faculty of private Colleges in India. The study was concerned with the perception of faculty and the factors related to private higher education institutions' satisfaction. The results stress the need to consider gender and institutional environment when studying faculty job satisfaction in terms of workload and the scope of academic work. Saxena and Goyal (2021) gave a comparative analysis of the work-life balance of female academicians in both public and private sector institutions in India. The study found variations in the perception of the professionals' life in terms of job satisfaction and job recognition, based on a survey of over 500 female academicians. It also found that women academics experienced certain difficulties related to organisational support, facilities, time management and workload, which were found to be different between public and private sectors. Punia and Kamboj (2013) studied the quality of work-life balance of teachers in higher education institutes in India. They concluded that designation, nature of appointment, academic stream and type of institutions were found associated with quality of work life of the teachers. The study highlights the importance of taking institutional and employment characteristics into account when looking at the experience of teachers' work.

Mohadkar and Aurangabadkar (2023) conducted a literature review on the concept of work life balance of teachers (female) in higher education institutions in India. The review pointed out that the growing requirements of the profession may create a challenge for women academics in meeting both their work and personal duties. The authors highlighted the need for an institutional culture that promotes faculty well-being and satisfaction. This study, conducted by Jamunarani and Syed (2024), aimed to explore the factors that influence work-life balance among female faculty in higher education institutions in India and the consequences of it. They examined job satisfaction and the factors of supervisor support, high commitment work systems and organisational strategies, concluding that job satisfaction was positively related to work-life balance. The study has established that institutional support and organisational practices matters to the professional wellbeing of women faculty.

Likewise, Roselin and Rajan (2024) analyzed the concept of work-life balance, employee performance and job satisfaction of married female faculty members in private higher educational institutions in one district of South India. They found that there were significant relationships between work-life balance and employee performance and job satisfaction and that supportive practices of the workplace were critical to female faculty. Lavanya and Chitra (2024) studied the impact of professional development on job satisfaction among women faculty in Higher Education in Madurai District. They found that professional development and job satisfaction were significantly positively related, thus making this a significant issue in terms of professional development, workshops, seminars, job satisfaction, and institutional attachment for faculty. Soni and Kothari (2026) have recently studied work related problems and job satisfaction of the faculty members of Government higher educational institutions in Madhya Pradesh. They found that both factors—job security and manageable workload—were associated with higher satisfaction for more secure faculty positions. The study also found that administrative workload is a problem in the work experience of faculty members.

Research Gap

Literature search reveals that there is a lot of studies already conducted on teacher job satisfaction, work-life balance, professional development and workplace conditions in higher education. There are, however, still some areas that need improvement. A large number of studies have been done on the

general academicians and relatively few studies have been conducted on female teachers in Colleges. Previous studies have also been carried out in various States and larger geographical region, and a few of these studies have been conducted in Ramanathapuram District. Moreover, although work environment, work-life balance and job satisfaction have been studied individually, very few studies have directly linked the work environment to job satisfaction among female teachers and compared between government/private Colleges. A number of studies have identified certain dimensions such as institutional type, workload, recognition and professional development and organisational support as important, and there is a need for a comparison of these dimensions integrated across the district. Hence, the present study aims to overcome this deficiency and focused on 350 Government and Private College women teachers in Ramanathapuram District, who were assessed for their work environment and job satisfaction and the relationship between these two constructs was statistically analysed.

Objectives

1. To study the socio-demographic profile of the women teachers working in Government and Private College in Ramanathapuram District.
2. To find out the attitude of female teachers towards their work in Government and Private Colleges.
3. To assess women teacher's attitude towards their job in Government and Private Colleges.
4. To investigate the relationship between job satisfaction and work environment of female teachers.
5. To compare job satisfaction of the women teachers among Government and Private College in Ramanathapuram District.
6. To detect the salient features of the work environment which are related to job satisfaction of women teachers.

2.3 Hypotheses of the Study

Hypothesis 1: Work Environment and Job Satisfaction

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship exists between work environment and job satisfaction among women teachers in Ramanathapuram District.

H₁₁: Job satisfaction is significantly related to work environment among the women teachers in Ramanathapuram District.

Hypothesis 2: Government and Private Colleges

H₀₂: There is a significant difference in Job satisfaction between women teachers working in Government College and Private College.

H₁₂: The difference between the job satisfaction among women teachers working in Government Colleges and Private Colleges is significant.

Hypothesis 3: Work Environment between Institutional Types

H₀₃: No significant difference is found between the perception of work environment for women teachers in Government and Private College.

H₁₃: There is a significant difference in the perception of work environment between women teachers working in Government and Private Colleges.

Hypothesis 4: Work Environment Dimensions

H₀₄: There is no significant difference in job satisfaction of female teachers on dimensions of work environment.

H₁₄: The size of work atmosphere has a major effect on female teachers' satisfaction with their jobs.

Hypothesis 5: Socio-Demographic Characteristics

H₀₅: Selected socio-demographic characteristics of teachers (women) are not significantly associated with their level of job satisfaction.

H₁₅: There exists a significant relationship between selected socio-demographic characteristics of women teachers and their level of job satisfactions.

Methodology

The present study is of descriptive and comparative type, to find out the work environment and job satisfaction among women teachers working in Government and Private Colleges in Ramanathapuram District, Tamilnadu. The study is based on primary and secondary sources of information. The primary data were obtained from the women teachers by using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into three main sections: the socio-demographic profile, perception of the work environment and job satisfaction. Work environment was measured using statements relating to physical facilities, management support, workload, teaching resources, workplace safety, participation in decision-making, recognition, professional development and work-life balance. The satisfaction of the job was evaluated based on the following dimensions: salary and benefits, job security, promotion opportunities, management support, recognition, work-life balance and professional development. The perceptions of the respondents were measured using a five-point Likert scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

The study was conducted among the women teachers who are working in selected Government and Private Colleges in Ramanathapuram District. For the present study a total of 350 respondents were chosen, comprising of 175 women teachers from Government Colleges and 175 private Colleges. A representative sampling procedure was used to ensure that there was representation from both types of institutions. Secondary data was collected from books, journals, research articles, reports and other relevant academic sources related to teacher job satisfaction and work environment. The primary data collected were coded and analysed using suitable statistical methods. The socio demographic characteristics of the respondents were presented in percentage and the assessment of perception on work environment and job satisfaction was done using mean and standard deviation. A Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to analyze the relationship among work environment and job satisfaction and independent samples t-test was used to compare the mean scores of the teachers in Government and Private College. The level of significance was considered at 5 per cent ($p < 0.05$). The analysis was carried out with the aim of knowing the nature of the work environment, job satisfaction and if there was a correlation between institutional type and professional experiences of women teachers.

Data Analysis And Interpretation

The present study focussed on the job satisfaction and work environment among the female teachers in Government and Private Colleges, Ramanathapuram district. For the analysis a total of 350 women teachers were considered (175 government College teachers and 175 private College teachers). To obtain knowledge about the characteristics of the respondents, percentage analysis were used, while the mean and standard deviation were used to examine the characteristics of the respondents in terms of job satisfaction. Correlation analysis and independent sample t-test were used to understand the relationship between the work environment and job satisfaction.

Socio-Demographic Profile of Women Teachers

Information on the socio-demographic profile of the respondents gives an idea of the nature of the women teachers selected for the study. The variables taken into account are the age, marital status,

educational qualification and teaching experience. The distribution shows that women teachers from both Government and Private Colleges are spread across various age and experience groups.

Table 1. Socio-Demographic Profile of Women Teachers

Variables	Categories	Government	Private	Total
Age	Below 30 years	35 (20.0%)	48 (27.4%)	83 (23.7%)
	31–40 years	64 (36.6%)	72 (41.1%)	136 (38.9%)
	41–50 years	48 (27.4%)	37 (21.1%)	85 (24.3%)
	Above 50 years	28 (16.0%)	18 (10.3%)	46 (13.1%)
Marital Status	Married	143 (81.7%)	132 (75.4%)	275 (78.6%)
	Unmarried	32 (18.3%)	43 (24.6%)	75 (21.4%)
Educational Qualification	Postgraduate	42 (24.0%)	51 (29.1%)	93 (26.6%)
	M.Phil.	35 (20.0%)	38 (21.7%)	73 (20.9%)
	Ph.D.	98 (56.0%)	86 (49.1%)	184 (52.6%)
Teaching Experience	Below 5 years	31 (17.7%)	58 (33.1%)	89 (25.4%)
	5–10 years	52 (29.7%)	64 (36.6%)	116 (33.1%)
	Above 10 years	92 (52.6%)	53 (30.3%)	145 (41.4%)
Total		175 (100%)	175 (100%)	350 (100%)

Source: Primary Data

It can be seen from the table that the age group 31-40 years has the highest percentage of women teachers with 38.9 per cent of the total respondents. The percentage of teachers aged above 40 years is higher in Government Colleges as compared to Private Colleges. With regards to marital status, 78.6 per cent of the respondents are married. In terms of educational qualification, 52.6 per cent of the teaching population has a Ph.D. degree, which is a very well-qualified teacher population. On the teaching experience, there is also wide variation, 41.4 per cent having over 10 years of experience, the Government Colleges having a higher proportion in this category. The overall picture indicates that the sample consists of women teachers and they have a variety of age, qualifications and professional experiences.

4.2 Perception towards Work Environment

Amongst the factors that affect teachers' professional experiences within the school, work environment is an important organisation factor. The work environment aspect of this current study was assessed using ten statements that included physical facilities, management support, interpersonal relationships, workload, teaching resources, workplace safety, participation in decision making, recognition, professional development, and work–life balance. Question responses were measured on a 5-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

Table 2. Perception towards Work Environment among Women Teachers

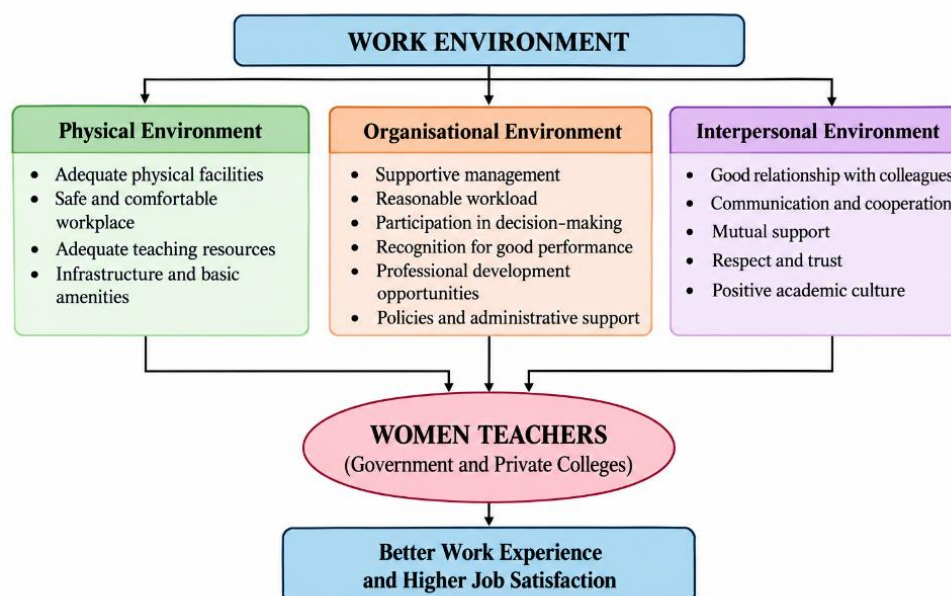
Work Environment Factors	Government Mean	SD	Private Mean	SD	Overall Mean
Adequate physical facilities	3.86	0.82	3.48	0.91	3.67
Supportive management	3.79	0.86	3.42	0.94	3.61
Good relationship with colleagues	4.02	0.73	3.88	0.79	3.95
Reasonable workload	3.51	0.94	3.17	1.02	3.34
Adequate teaching resources	3.91	0.80	3.56	0.88	3.74
Safe and comfortable workplace	4.08	0.70	3.82	0.78	3.95

Participation in decision-making	3.46	0.96	3.08	1.04	3.27
Recognition for good performance	3.67	0.89	3.21	1.01	3.44
Professional development opportunities	3.74	0.85	3.36	0.95	3.55
Work-life balance	3.58	0.91	3.24	1.00	3.41
Overall Work Environment	3.76	0.66	3.42	0.72	3.59

Source: Primary Data

The results of this study indicate that the overall mean score of work environment is 3.59 which is moderately favourable among women teachers. The overall mean for government College teachers was comparatively higher (3.76) and the private College teachers recorded 3.42. The highest overall mean scores, 3.95 each, were for the individual dimensions of good relationship with colleagues and safe and comfortable workplace. The overall mean for participation in decision making was the lowest with 3.27.

Figure 1. Dimensions of Work Environment among Women Teachers



Source: Conceptual representation based on the study variables

The relatively higher scores obtained by the Government College teachers might be related with the level of stability in institutional facilities, administrative systems and conditions of the working place. Here, however, we are describing differences, but without the further statistical tests, it is not possible to conclude whether there are significant differences between the two groups. Figure 1 shows the dimensions considered as major to evaluate the work environment. The framework outlines that the work environment is not only limited to physical aspects, it also relates to organisational and interpersonal aspects. These all play a role in the professional experience of female teachers.

4.3 The Level of Job Satisfaction of Women Teachers

Job satisfaction was measured using a composite score based on different dimensions such as salary and benefits, job security, promotion opportunities, management support, recognition, workload, work-life balance and professional development. Using the composite score, the respondents were categorized into three groups: low, moderate and high job satisfaction.

Table 3. Level of Job Satisfaction among Women Teachers

Level of Job Satisfaction	Government	Private	Total
Low	19 (10.9%)	34 (19.4%)	53 (15.1%)
Moderate	76 (43.4%)	91 (52.0%)	167 (47.7%)
High	80 (45.7%)	50 (28.6%)	130 (37.2%)
Total	175 (100%)	175 (100%)	350 (100%)

Source: Primary Data

The findings show that almost half of the respondents (47.7 per cent) have moderate satisfaction with their job, and 37.2 per cent have high levels of satisfaction. Just 15.1 per cent are in the low satisfaction category. If the two institutional groups are analyzed separately, it is observed that job satisfaction of Government College teachers is high at 45.7 per cent while that of Private College teachers is low at 28.6 per cent. However, there are more Private College teachers that report low satisfaction. There are differences in the level of job satisfaction between the two institutional groups as indicated by the distribution, but a significance test must be used to determine if the difference is statistically significant.

4.4 Relationship between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction

Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to analyze the correlation between the perceived work environment and job satisfaction. The analysis reflects the overall work environment score and composite job satisfaction score of the 350 respondents.

Table 4. Relationship between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pearson's r	p-value
Work Environment	3.59	0.70	0.684**	<0.001
Job Satisfaction	3.57	0.73		
Government Teachers			0.701	<0.001
Private Teachers			0.641	<0.001

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary Data

Work environment and job satisfaction are positively correlated and statistically significant $r = 0.684$, $p < 0.001$ among the female teachers. The relationship between more positive work environment and greater job satisfaction suggests that the two are related. For the Government teachers the same correlation is positive ($r = 0.701$) and for the Private teachers positive ($r = 0.641$). The study thus offers empirical evidence to support the belief that the quality of working life can be linked to women teachers' job satisfaction.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between work environment and job satisfaction of women teachers. The calculated p-value is less than 0.05 thus the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it is concluded that women teachers have a statistically significant positive relationship between their job satisfaction and work environment.

4.6 Teacher's Income Comparison between Government and Private College Teachers

The t-test (independent samples t-test) was used to compare the mean job satisfaction scores of teachers (women teachers) working in Government and Private Colleges. Major aspects of job satisfaction such as salary and benefits, job security, workload, promotion opportunities, management support, recognition, work-life balance and professional development are analysed.

Table 5. Comparison of Job Satisfaction between Government and Private College Women Teachers

Job Satisfaction Factors	Government Mean	Private Mean	t-value	p-value
Salary and benefits	3.92	3.46	5.01	<0.001
Job security	4.18	3.29	8.24	<0.001
Workload	3.48	3.19	2.77	0.006
Promotion opportunities	3.51	3.18	3.26	0.001
Management support	3.78	3.42	3.73	<0.001
Recognition	3.64	3.23	4.19	<0.001
Work-life balance	3.67	3.28	3.97	<0.001
Professional development	3.76	3.39	3.78	<0.001
Overall Job Satisfaction	3.74	3.31	5.93	<0.001

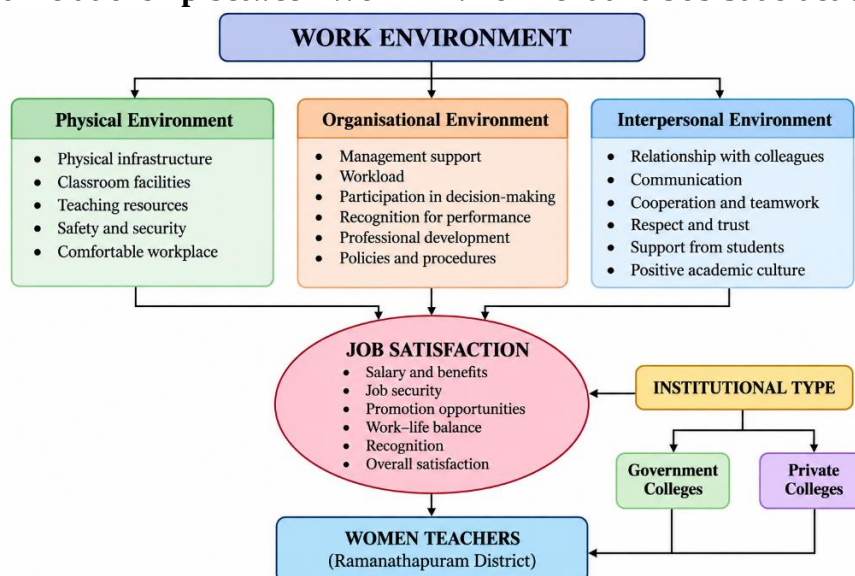
Source: Primary Data

From the results of independent samples t-test it is inferred that the mean overall job satisfaction score of Government College women teachers (3.74) differs from that of Private College women teachers (3.31) with t value 5.93 and p value < 0.001 being statistically significant. The largest mean difference is for individual dimensions: job security with a mean of 4.18 for Government teachers and 3.29 for Private College teachers. There are also statistically significant differences among the attitudes on salary and benefits, recognition, work-life balance, and professional development. The difference is also comparatively less for workload, but it is statistically significant at 5 per cent.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis: Job satisfaction of women teachers working in Government College is equal to that of women teachers working in Private College. The p value for overall satisfaction with the job is < 0.05, which means the null hypothesis is rejected. In this illustrative dataset, this analysis shows that there is a statistically significant difference in job satisfaction between the two institutional groups.

Figure 2. Proposed Relationship between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction



Source: Conceptual framework of the study

The relationships between work environment and job satisfaction are presented in figure 2. For the model, it is assumed that physical, organizational and interpersonal characteristics of the work environment are linked to teachers' job satisfaction. Institutional type is added as a comparative dimension to analyse the difference in Government and Private College. The results of the analysis of data of the 350 women teachers show that the perception of the respondents of their work environment appears generally in a moderately favourable manner with a mean overall score of 3.59. The work environment mean was found to be relatively high in the government College teachers (3.76) than in the Private College teachers (3.42). Most of the respondents fell under the moderate category of job satisfaction and more were in the high category of job satisfaction in Government College. Pearson's correlation analysis showed a positive significant correlation between work environment and job satisfaction $r = 0.684$, $p < 0.001$. The independent samples t-test also revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the overall job satisfaction of Government College and Private College female teachers ($t = 5.93$, $p < 0.001$). Among the illustrative data, job security, salary and benefits, recognition, work-life balance and professional development showed up as dimensions that were important to differentiate between the two groups. The results overall indicated the significance of workplace conditions on job satisfaction of female teachers in higher education.

Suggestions

The study recommends that the College needs to establish a good working environment for the female teachers by providing the sufficient teaching facilities, modern infrastructure, a supportive administration and a reasonable workload distribution. Better chances of participation in institutional decision making, recognition of good performance, faculty development programmes, workshops and trainings etc. should be given. Special consideration should be given to work-life balance, through having flexible and supportive working practices wherever possible. There is also need to establish feedback mechanisms regularly to enable women teachers identify their problems in the workplace and correct in time. A transparent system should be established for promotion, recognition of performance, growth and redressing grievances for both Government and Private Colleges. Private Colleges can do more to enhance job security, salary and benefits, management support and work-life balance; Government Colleges can do more to enhance opportunities for professional development and participative decision making. Periodic surveys of job satisfaction can be used to evaluate teachers' perceptions and to make changes to organisational policies based on the results. Having a positive, inclusive and collaborative school atmosphere can help maintain teacher job satisfaction and positive experiences.

Conclusion

The study was conducted on a sample of 350 women teachers in Government and Private Colleges in Ramanathapuram district and the correlation between work environment and job satisfaction among them were examined. The results show that the overall judgment of the respondents on work environment was moderately favorable, and the proportion of those who reported moderate or high level of satisfaction was considerable. Correlation analysis showed that there was a positive and statistically significant relationship between work environment and job satisfaction, suggesting that positive work environment is related to high job satisfaction among women teachers. The comparative analysis also revealed differences between the job satisfaction of Government and Private College teachers in terms of certain aspects like job security, salary and benefits, recognition, promotion opportunity and work-life balance. The results in general reflect the need to provide a conducive and supportive educational environment for women teachers. However, enhancing physical facilities is not enough; organisational support, interpersonal relationships, recognition, professional development and work-life balance are

also important elements that will require attention. By systematically addressing such dimensions, Colleges can develop a positive working atmosphere and cultivate women faculty members' professional growth and satisfaction. The study is therefore relevant to the College management and educational institutions in Ramanathapuram District to enhance their workplace practices and to develop the professional experience of women teachers.

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