

Conciliation between work, family and personal life. A pending issue for female faculty?

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Abstract

The mass participation of women in the work force around the world has been a major historical event with the greatest impact in the economy and society worldwide. With such participation there have been several changes in the family dynamics, as well as the roles that women play in the family. Women not only work as housekeepers but they also have become income providers for the maintenance and care of the household. In spite of the changes aforementioned, the advancement of equality in the development of policies to promote balance between work, family and personal life is very slow, although this problem is not only a women's problem, they are the ones who suffer the most disadvantage.

This mixed-method research, analyses the experience of female teachers at a public university. With the purpose of harmonizing the different roles that each of them play at the workplace, family and personal aspects.

Keywords: balance, work, family, free time, teachers, México

Theoretical framework

Conciliation: a gender problem

Historically speaking, the roles and functions of each gender have been assigned, as part of the social and economic development of society. On one hand, women roles have been always associated to reproduction, upbringing, physical and emotional care, within the domestic environment. On the other hand men have been usually associated to the productive aspect, maintenance and provision of the family, which is usually developed in a public environment.

However, several worldwide events, such as the mass incorporation of women in the job market, brought a series of challenges, which changed the roles aforementioned. (López, 2007) One of those challenges

was to balance work, family, free time and personal time and it made it very difficult to conciliate the roles in the different aspect of life as mentioned before.

Conciliation is trying to harmonize; to conciliate is to seek a balance between work, family life and free time; it is a problem that goes beyond the private sphere, it is becoming a public issue, so the government and labor organizations should be involved in it as well.

Romero (2009), a specialist in employment law, says that, to talk about this topic - conciliation- it requires a double effort: first because it consists of a permanent knowledge to assimilate the wide channel of existing information in applicable law at European, national and regional level, judicial doctrine, collective agreements, etc., and after that because it is the recognition of effective equality between men and women (p. 1).

Pilar Martín Chaparro, Ph.D. in Social Psychology, Professor at the Universidad de Murcia, España, and researcher in areas such as: minors, young people, health, quality of life, violence, gender and altruism, defines conciliation as:

...a set of social, institutional and entrepreneurial actions with the purpose of developing a more egalitarian and fair society. It is a way of organizing the work environment that facilitates to men and women the carrying out their job and their personal, and family responsibilities. Conciliation does not mean working less, but to do it in a different way (Martín, 2009, p. 52).

Although work, family and personal life are areas that have been always linked, the changes in the last decades such as keeping schedules inherited from times when morning and afternoon jobs were incompatible, the jobs pressures that are consequences of a globalized economy and the tendency towards the real extension of the working day, have intensified this interdependency, making it more visible and, more difficult for women.

For Inés Alberdi (2003), the last Executive Director (from 2008 to 2010) of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), before its merging with UN Women, conciliation, from a sociological perspective, was described this way:

- From the field of what was traditionally considered as part of the femininity, such as the family, motherhood and the affective;
- From the innovative field, more modern and attractive for younger women; it is characterized for being outside the family, its public nature and its relation with paid jobs.

Both approaches are in conflict because of the current sociocultural idea that expects women to develop simultaneously, as a person, in the family and job areas as well. Such matter is a characteristic that applies only to the women's jobs, because men do not have that conflict between developing their ambitions in the field outside the family, which is what pressure them naturally, regarding their participation in the family areas, in which they have less responsibilities. (Instituto de la Mujer, 2005).

Likewise, Cristina Guirao, professor at the universities of Murcia and Alicante, and well-known author on topics such as conciliation and public policies in Spain, affirms that it is mainly women who face the problem of conciliation first of all, as they began to take part in productive jobs they had a double working day: job and family. Also, because the gender stereotypes have prevailed in the society; finally, because

of the incipient development of public policies in favor of the families have made evident that the state of well-being has not adapted in full to the social changes required by the production model. (Guirao, 2011).

The research about conciliation: Approaches and characteristics

Therefore, it is important to discern the conflict between family life and work life in order to consider it a subject of scientific study. The extinct Instituto de la Mujer en España (Women's Institute in Spain) describes three main characteristics included in the conciliation studies:

1. The common and necessary demographic data that help to know the participants in the social and work environment.
2. All matters related to the use of time and care of dependent people, according to sex.
3. Everything related to the work place structure, from the gender perspective. (Instituto de la Mujer, 2005)

In the first type of data the participants are asked aspects such as birthrate, fertility, home composition, delay in birthrate, relation between the number of children, inactivity and gender; voluntary abandonment of jobs due to family reasons, among others.

Regarding the second aspect included in the conciliation studies, referring to the use of time and care of dependent people; according to sex, the participants usually make evident the traditional distribution of tasks, according to gender, including the women who work outside the homes, which means they have a double role o double workload.

Finally, the third data group that is necessary to know is, how the jobs are composed according to the gender perspective In this sense, questions about activity, inactivity, occupation and employment, time of employment, occupational and sectorial segregation, difference in salaries, etc. help to discern the inequality of gender in the job market.

The Instituto de la Mujer en España mentioned, in 2008, that there are wide varieties of approaches to delineate the phenomenon of conciliation because of the breadth of the topic and its multidisciplinary complexity. However, the research is divided into two perspectives:

1. Sociological, and
2. Economic

Starting from the sociological perspective, regarding conciliation it is based on the traditional structure of values, laws, beliefs and identities, that are inherent to system of statues and gender roles, that evidence the symptoms of cultural transformation, which include the culture of freedom of the individual, in general, and the women as a collective subject, in particular. (p. 27).

Regarding the roles and gender identities, considered within the traditional social structure that prevail nowadays, women have been always considered people who are at the service of others, while men are considered the breadwinners. But the truth is, that there are a great number of women who are actively providing for the economy of the family, through their jobs, or even paid underemployment, their salaries can even be higher than the salary of the "man of the house".

The gender roles are significant elements within the family socialization, but also the mass media, as part of the formal education. (Instituto de la Mujer, 2008) The gender messages are transmitted at earlier stages of the socialization, for example, when parents interact in different ways with their children, depending on the sex of the child, whether is a boy or a girl. Likewise, when mass media emphasize the difference between the male or female characteristics in toys, games, books, music, etc. the gender roles stand out, according to the traditional family structure, in which men are strong, brave, intelligent, individualistic and sexually free, while women are weak, kind, quiet, sexually repressed and less intelligent than men.

These roles, which are learned and promoted in their environment, perpetuate the paternalistic structure, in which men are the highest authority of the house and have the last word in everything, while women are the kind and tender caregivers.

Needless to say is that the traditional view is that women's realization is only through marriage and child rearing. The family pressure increases as women reach the reproductive years and as they approach their thirties.

Regarding the economic perspective, it is worth mentioning that, since the integration of women to the job market, their labor rights have been lower compared to the rights of men. They are underpaid, yet their responsibilities at work and at home remain the same, in addition to the social pressure to comply with their role as a woman, as mentioned above.

Anne Oakley defended the hypothesis that domestic work, as seen nowadays, emerged from the separation between the home and the work place. Since the beginning of industrialization, the concept of work, departed from the home and the houses turned into a place of consumption instead of a place of production of goods. So, the domestic work became invisible, as the "real" work was defined as the work made in exchange of a payment. (Giddens, 2001).

Far from thinking of a new work model, the sexual division remains the same; the family responsibilities, the care and education of the children, are exclusively delegated to women, whereas men enjoy the consent of living in a public environment. (Beneria,1999)

The economist and historian Cristina Borderías, et al. (1994) assume that the new family economy is not enough to explain the decision making process at home, and the strategies adopted to face birthrate or the conciliation of the family life and work life; because it does not take into account the non-economic elements such as the traditional roles, status and gender identities.

An important aspect, which should not be ignored, is that from the feminist economics point of view, a paid job is based on non-paid jobs, or the work within the homes that benefit the family members, including those who are not economically active. The cost of non-paid jobs is difficult to calculate, because, in addition to the traditional domestic work, it also includes taking care of people (emotional, affective and relational activities) (Carrasco et. al, 2011)

Regardless of the average age in a country, taking care of the people is essential for the optimal functioning of the family. Children, young people, and seniors require care all the same. Such classification worsens the distribution of the workload among the family members, strengthening the gender power. In other words, care giving is a feminine job.

The job market is not responsible for providing such care, neither does the government, therefore the family assumes the responsibility of providing care, with the support of the public health services. That means that each family depends on their income to provide for care services that can afford. Anyway, the participation of women in the job market is nowadays under transaction conditions, which means poor labor conditions that allow them to continue with their domestic roles along with their paid jobs. This double workload produce stress, physical and psychological burnout; and it's even worse depending on their social or ethnic condition.

The study of conciliation in Mexico

According to García (2004), in the last 35 years there has been an international fight for the "starting, integration, development, analysis, and first evaluation about laws on equality" including Latin America and the Caribbean. The author mentions that several factor have influenced the development of various legal forms, especially in the judicial, political and administrative aspects, although not exclusively. The First World Conference on Women, held in Mexico in 1975, was the stage to denounce the "incomplete" character of the legislation on women's rights. Although such interest was based on the feminist pro-vote movement of the 19th Century.

García (2004) mentions that from that conference, the institutions, groups and people committed to present new ideas around the gender topics had a second wind.

Compared to the European countries, in Mexico the studies on conciliation between work, family and personal life it's still at its early stages; despite the interest of the Government to present initiatives that promote equality between men and women in the work environment. However, such efforts as small compared to the rapid social transformation in our country, due to the demographic changes, in which the population growth is changing rapidly, and showing an increase in the age of the population. This situation, combined with the reduction in fertility, and life expectancy, shows an evident change in the structure and dynamics of the Mexican families, although it is not the same in cultural aspects.

So there is a need to transform the social policies of today in order to guarantee the equal participation of men and women in domestic and non-domestic activities, either paid or unpaid, as well as to ensure fair labor conditions that allow them to develop in full. Such wellbeing can only be achieved through policies that promote harmonization (Samaniego and Ochoa, 2009)

But, why is it important to promote balance between work, family and personal life for everyone?

Duxbury & Higgins (2003), expert Canadian researchers on conciliation, proved that an adequate balance is related to more commitment to remain in the jobs, less stress, lower absenteeism, and more job satisfaction; as well as more satisfaction with the company as a work place. At the family level, effective conciliation promotes family integration and adaptation, positive parenthood, and satisfactory family life as a whole. At the personal level it means lower stress, less depressive mood, less tiredness and more satisfaction with their health and life in general. At the social level it means less demand of the health service system. In other words, the people win as well as the labor institutions and the government, everyone wins and as a consequence of a balance between work and life.

Based on the data, it is interesting to know what happens in the conciliation of work, family and personal life among female teachers, at a public university in the South East of México. A research to know the strategies that women working at a university use to balance their work, family and personal life will contribute to understand the matter and it will serve as a theoretical framework to seek legal changes to promote conciliation in those levels. Such knowledge will be useful for women as well as for men working in the context of the study.

Methodology

Purpose of the study

To analyze the perception of university female teachers about the phenomenon of conciliation and its implication at work, family and personal levels.

Research design

This project is a descriptive, in depth research, because it is based on collecting data about the phenomenon and its context (Hernández, Fernandez & Baptista, 2005). A mixed-method was used, consisting of quantitative as well as qualitative methods. The use of mixed-method allows understanding the phenomenon from different perspectives, in this case the conciliation between work, family and personal life. Therefore quantitative and qualitative techniques were used to achieve the objectives of the study.

Participants

The participants were full-time female teachers working at a public university in the South East of México. The project is based on the assumption that these women are exposed to strong pressures that demand larger amounts of time than what was established in their 40-hours job contract, because the university demands high job performance standards in order to obtain funds from federal programs through government institutions.

The criteria to select the participants of the project are the following:

1. To be a female teacher working full-time at a bachelor degree or postgraduate program. Working 8 hours a day or more in the program makes it difficult, but not impossible, to have another teaching position at another institution or work independently.
2. To have the position of Professor or Researching Professor, on a permanent (tenure) or temporary contract, requires that the teacher perform 5 basic activities as described below.
3. Professors are required to participate in teaching, tutoring, counseling, management and evaluation, in order to have access to grants for academic performance, to obtain national recognition and funds from the Professional Teaching Development Program for Higher Education (PRODEP) and from the National Researchers System (SNI), which give the participants certain degree or status within the institution, which also increases the level of commitment and heavier workload.

The participants were not excluded according to age, civil status, having children or not, because the diversity of cases was considered beneficial to understand the problem of conciliation between work and family life from a wider perspective. The only criteria for exclusion were having a part-time contract.

Research stages, techniques and instruments

To achieve the objective of the research, several techniques were implemented, in order to ensure an understanding of the phenomenon from different perspectives, and from the point of view of the teachers at the public university in the South East of Mexico. The following table explains the stages of the research and also de instruments used in each stage and the technique used to gather the information.

Table 1. *Instruments and techniques used in each stage of the research*

Stage	Instrument	Technique
1st.	Questionnaire	Survey
2nd.	Interview guide	In depth interview
3rd.	Questions guide	Focus group

Source: own research

Due to the limitations of this paper only part of the findings of this project, of qualitative type, will be presented; in particular the findings related to the second stage or the in-depth interviews.

Procedures for data collection in the second stage of the project

At the end of the data collection, through a survey and by using a questionnaire (stage 1), the participants who expressed their interest on participating in the research project were identified and contacted, using the information they provided in the questionnaire. The participants were called and appointments were set up to carry out the in-depth interviews, in which the key topics of this research were discussed. The main purpose of the interviews was to go deeper in those aspects related to the conciliation, that arose from the information provided in the questionnaires used in stage 1, in order to understand the phenomenon in a particular way, through their personal experience. The meetings took place during a period of 2 months, and 8 teachers participated. The time spent in the interviews was 40 minutes on average, and by request of the participants the interviews were carried out in their offices.

Data Analysis

The data collected was transcribed, coded and analyzed through the qualitative data analysis software ATLAS.TI, version 7.

Ethical considerations

The participants were asked permission to record the interviews, having made clear the anonymity of their participation. During the transcription the real names were changed in order to eliminate the possibility of identification.

Findings

Below are the findings obtained through the interviews, that answer in part, the objective of this study. The information here is focused on the perception of the women that participated about the balance of their different roles in the areas of work, family and personal life; their satisfaction regarding those areas, as well as the strategies they use to conciliate them, and also the legal mechanisms that help them achieve it, from the job perspective.

Perceptions about the personal aspect

In general, one of the aspects that are rarely considered when conciliating is the personal aspect, this means the leisure time and time for personal development. In fact, the literature revised for this project, in general it focused on the areas dedicated to taking care of the family and domestic activities, as well as the activities in the paid jobs and the productive work of women. During the interviews it was evident that women had difficulties organizing their time, therefore they have little room for leisure activities and personal development.

The following quote is a good example of this.

Beatriz: I don't have time for myself. I remember this week, a friend from work asked me to go walking at the Inalambrica; to lose weight, and she told me: "we are going from 6:30 to 7:30", and I told her: "I can't because I am helping my son with his homework (...) I always say that I want to do some exercise and that I have to get up earlier, but if I usually get up at 5:30, that means I have to get up at 4:30, at least, in order to have a chance to exercise, but I can't; I don't wake up, even if I wanted to; and sometimes I say that I am going to get up at 5, to go on a bike for half an hour, but I don't do it. It is very difficult right now; I have no time for any other activity.

It is noticeable the fact that the paid jobs are the cause for little leisure time and rest, to be enjoyed individually, or with family and friends, like in this example:

Teresa: "(...) there are some difficult times at work when I say: "I don't want to work anymore!", I wish I have more time for doing this or doing that, but I don't!" or to have time for going to the movies or watching a film at home, or just doing nothing... sometimes I take some time off, during holidays, I try to take some time off; but, you don't always get what you want".

Another participant said that she tries to take some time to do some exercise or to go see a nutrition expert.

Teresa: "(...) you know Zumba, it helps me, that's why I try to go, at least once a week; I try to go to see the nutritionist, because I have gained so much weight (...) I go every two weeks, but (...) Zumba, I think that is the most personal time I can get (...)"

Also, there are times when they are so tired that they prefer to sleep rather than doing something else. They would even do more work if they could, as it is seen in this example.

Elena: "(...) suddenly I feel that I need to sleep, that I can't work any more. I stop what I am doing and I go to sleep, but if I could I would make the night last longer. I wish I wasn't so tired, because the night is long, and during the night I can enjoy doing some work while the others are sleeping. The problem is that when you are so tired you can't be as productive (...)"

Perceptions about the domestic care and family responsibilities

Another important and well-known aspect in the studies on conciliation is the domestic work and family responsibilities. It refers to the roles played by women in the domestic activities, as well as the care they provide to the rest of the family. Women usually carry all the weight of such responsibilities, as it has been described in the literature reviewed. One of the characteristic of this aspect is that it never ends, they began early in the morning and finish late at night, including the weekends. The participants in the interviews mentioned this.

Guadalupe: " (...) in general, since early in the morning, I have to take care of my sister and give my mother their medicine, to take their blood pressure, sometimes to give injections to my sister. (After work) I go home and I have to change my roles, to pay the bills, do the groceries, to check the doctor's appointments. My mother and my sister have swimming lessons on Monday and Wednesday at 7 at night, so I take them to their swimming lesson from 7 to 8. After that we have dinner and then check on their medication again, and then they go to bed... I need to take care of them... whatever they need. It takes me a little more than 20 hours a week.

Although taking care of the people means to be alert for long periods of time before and after work at the university, when they have young children there are no fixed times for cleaning, specially when they get sick. As expressed in this example:

Sara: There are good days and bad days. Right now Tonito is sick, which means that I have to get up two or three times during the night. Some times when he is sick, he wakes up and vomits because of the phlegm, and I have to clean the vomit in the middle of the night, and change his clothes. Some nights it happens only once, but, at least, it happens once every night.

However, for the participants is important to distribute the activities among the other family members, in order to avoid the women's overload; and that also means a significant effort to organize the activities by making their partner, and other family members, aware of their co-responsibility in looking after each other.

Beatriz: (...) it is basically among the three of them, because even the older one (of the children) helps us. We divide the chores, "today you wash the dishes, then you, and the next day, you" except the youngest one. The older one (of the children) only cleans his room and sometimes sweeps the floors.

Nevertheless this additional effort of making the other family members aware of their duties and responsibilities at home is not always easy.

Teresa: "Now, I tell them to wash their own dishes after dinner, because every morning I find dirty dishes, and I have to wash them, there are only a few, and it doesn't bother me to do it. What bothers me is that they are not kind enough to wash their dishes after dinner, they leave it in the sink, but they can wash them too. That is education, and kindness towards other people, not because I can wash the dishes."

There is something that is determinant, when people have to take on their responsibilities in the family, the behavioral patterns that have been learned as part of a traditional and chauvinist education.

Teresa: "Yesterday at my fathers house, my dad was telling me things, and asking why my daughter has a cell phone. My husband was beside me and he told my father "talk to your daughter", so, I am the guilty one. As I said, it is always my fault, I don't know how they do it, but the responsibilities in the house and the children are always on me...

And of course, money is an important factor to fulfill the domestic responsibilities by the members of the family (when money is limited) or it could be done by other people, family or not, as a paid service, in other words, to hire people to provide the care and domestic service.

Sara: So, that is the thing, how we deal with it. How to deal with life, I mean, the job and personal life of a woman. It has to do with the economy as well.

Therefore, the women's perspective, even now in the 21st Century, about the participation of the other members of the family, and especially the husband, in domestic work and the care of the family, is considered help and not co-responsibility.

Leticia: (...) in difficult times I have gone to my husband and he helped me ...

Beatriz: I get home and my husband has made my son's dinner, he has already helped me.

Regardless of the cultural influence, it is possible to learn new behavioral patterns through conscientious efforts and shared responsibilities, that the housework and care of the family is not a "women's job", but it is belongs to the other members in the family.

Sara: It is not "I help you", it is "you help me". To do what? They are also your children and that's how we see women, who work, and they are not the exception, it is something common. Before, I think it was the exception for a woman to play all the roles and do it well, like to be OK with their marriage, to be OK with their children and in addition to that to be academically successful. Nowadays I think, that it is possible and we see many cases in which people play different roles, but that is because of cultural and social changes, and it has to do a lot with how men are being raised.

For women it is necessary and fundamental to agree with their husbands about the care of their dependents, as well as the distribution of the housework. To comply with such agreements produces a solid relationship, based on companionship and mutual support.

Cinthyia: (...) we are organized, for example, he doesn't like to do the dishes, so I do the dishes, and he mops and sweeps the floors. I usually do the laundry, but if I am having a difficult week, I can program it for him, you know... This week I am not going to be able to do the laundry, can you do it ? OK , I can do it on Thursday, and then he gets organized.

Perceptions about living together

On the other hand, although some couples work well together regarding the care of the family, and the housework, it is evident that there is an inevitable cost for the couples, and it consists in forgetting to be "sweethearts" to become parents, caregivers, dish washers, nurses, etc. they can play all these roles, except of the roles of a couple, romantically speaking.

Beatriz: No, we don't have time left for us (...) some times we say that we need to spend time together, as a couple, but time flies and, yes we have dedicated our time to our children, because we used to have much less time than today...

Some participants, without children or dependents that demand their time and care, spend time together, usually after work. They share time and talk, but mainly during the weekends, they spend time going out and in leisure activities.

Maricruz: Sometimes the best days to spend time together are Fridays or Saturdays, we spend more time together, we go out for a drink and we go late to bed, because we know we don't have to get up early the next day.

It is important for the participants to acknowledge that life together is one of the aspects that they deal with better among the demands of time required for the housework and the job, as they refer to their satisfaction.

Beatriz: As a couple (...) I am very happy, although we fight sometimes and we have different opinions (...)

Maricruz: (...) well, life together is OK, we need to deal a little more with the pressure of moving together, because I personally like being alone and independent, so I have suffered it in that way...

Perceptions about paid jobs

To be paid workers is a role the participants dedicate more time, according to their sayings during the interviews. They say that they spend around 8 hours every day working at the college (which is the maximum labor time according to the Federal Labor Law in México), some days or during special periods they spend almost 50 hours a week, considering only the time at the workplace.

Guadalupe: (...) I arrive at the college at about 7 in the morning and begin the activities for the day, and I work until 4 in the afternoon.

Maricruz: (...) sometimes I don't work only 8 hours, but a little more.

Beatriz: If I have a lot of work, I leave the college at about 9 at night, which is the latest I have left, almost 10 hours.

During that time they carry out several activities: teaching course, doing administrative activities, research projects, data collection, academic meetings, community service, etcetera

Maricruz. My activities here are, what I do?, well, I teach courses. I look after, usually every semester, I look after a laboratory, and so I have to oversee the practices every week, because they have to be planned. Although I know how to do the practices, but all the materials need to be checked. Everything about the classes, planning the lessons, in addition to that I have a pharmacology laboratory and I am in charge of the laboratory; to maintain the bacteria and fungi that we keep in the laboratory. I also have a group of voluntary students and I have to oversee their activities, because they help me in the laboratory and whatever is needed here: to carry out the research projects, revise the literature, to attend the meetings (...)

This variety of activities makes it sometimes impossible to complete their work in 8 hours (or more) a day, which they spend at the workplace, so they take some work home.

Beatriz: (...) if I have unfinished work I do it at home, I go late to bed, at about 1 a.m. or 2 a.m. depending on ... (..) the type of work I have, sometimes I have worked until 2 a.m., and sometimes I begin to work at 11 p.m., after my children have gone to bed, sometime two or three hours.

This is mainly due to the personal commitment these women have with their institution and the administration, and the importance they give to their jobs.

Teresa: (...) it helps me a lot to work in a college like this one, although if I have a class or a meeting, or it is a special week at the college, I have to be available, I cannot say no, and I know that. So I plan my life around that.

Such commitment, according to the participant's perception, is acknowledged by the administration of their workplace.

Beatriz: I have had the support of the administration. I usually work here 8 hours and I can decide on my schedule, I mean, I can come here at 8 in the morning, and leave at 1 in the afternoon, return at 5 in the afternoon and leave at 8 at night. In this case that is my real schedule. But the administrative secretary allows me to have a continuous working day if I need it. So I take the lunch break, for example this week I have laboratory from three to five and from five to eight; it is easier for me to go home, have lunch, and I spend an hour with my son, helping him with his homework, and then I go back to the school.

In the same sense, there is a generalized opinion that the gender of the immediate supervisor is not an obstacle when trying to conciliate, on the contrary, it is a support provided by the college and it also has to do with the type of personal relationship between the teachers and their immediate supervisors.

Guadalupe: I think that there is no difference whether the boss is a man or a woman, it has to do with the relationship with them and how well you get along with them (...) some male bosses are kind and sensitive and they say: "Don't worry, go take care of the problem and will see later on", some male bosses say "Why do you have to leave?" It is the same with female bosses, I have had female bosses who are very kind and the say "Don't worry, you don't have to come back in the afternoon, you don't have to compensate the time or whatever, work can wait", but other bosses say, "that's your problem, work is work and you have to finish it".

In addition, it is important to notice that some participants recognize that the institution exercise so much pressure in order to comply with their expectations, so they had to postpone some personal plans such as personal development or maternity in order to meet the professional expectations, and that also has some negative health effects.

Leticia: (...) it has been very tiring, in fact, I finished the Master's degree in two years, I don't know what would have happened if it had lasted more time. Not only me but other colleagues too, we had a health crisis, or so much stress, it was terrible, it was exhausting, because for us it meant a greater challenge, to keep up with the same activities and on top of that to study the Master's degree, it was truly exhausting.

On the other hand, there is one aspect related to professional development, and in the case of the teachers, that means having a postgraduate degree, Master's or Doctor, which can be part of the personal

development, but it has a direct impact on the job and sometimes the decision to obtain a postgraduate degree comes as a requirement from the school in order to increase the academic level of their staff.

Elena: (...) in fact, the PhD degree is my main priority, I really need to finish it, I made the decision myself, I cannot blame the University or the college, or no one, I was invited and I accepted, so it is my problem, I have to deal with it (...)

Congruently teachers stress the implications of their roles at work, specially working extra time, working at home, trying to meet expectations, having health complications due to stress, to experience the lack of resources (job stability, recognition of funding institutions, or the same university) and that made them feel less satisfied with their roles.

Maricruz: (...) in my job I feel satisfied but not completely, why? Because I have several goals, ideally I should have research assistants, but I don't. I am trying to belong to the national researchers system (SNI), I used to belong to the system but I had some problem and I lost my registry. When I began to work here I tried to register it again but unfortunately I couldn't because of my age, so I had to comply with their requirements for level one, now after two years I think I am ready to register again, I hope I will be lucky this time and get registered.

It is relevant to point out, that for the development of this project, it was important to understand the strategies that these women use to conciliate their roles, As well as the mechanisms of legal support that they know, which help them balance their roles. First of all we have the use of a date planner to set their activities for one, or several days, or in the case of a particular teacher for the whole semester.

Guadalupe: (...) I use a date planner, but I am writing in pencil, because it can be changed at any time, isn't it?. Before it was very difficult for me to do that because if it was written in the planner then it had to be done (...)

On the other hand there is a network of family and friends, who don't get paid, but play an important role so the workers can balance their family responsibilities.

Sara: There is no way to be a teacher and a mother without the support of other people. In this case I receive a lot of support from my mother and my mother in law (...) I can't imagine what I would do right now, with my work schedule, without the help of them. Sometimes we have to do the impossible to accomplish a job like this, to have and academic job, to be a University teacher, without the help that I receive.

It is important also to hire someone to help with the domestic work. It is a key element, so the participants could organize their time better depending on the demands of their activities.

Leticia: There is a lady that has been helping with cleaning the house for almost 18 years. Actually, I like to clean house, it helps me relax; but she needs the job and it's okay with me, she comes to help two days a week.

Regarding their legal mechanisms to support balance and conciliation, the teachers mentioned to ignore the information about that matter.

Leticia: I have very little information about it, actually I have never looked for it.

Guadalupe: In written no, I don't know if it exists, I don't know it.

There are also some opinions referring to the internal policies at the University, which are directly related to male teachers, such as the affiliation to the medical service for them and their families; but that is not the same when the worker is a woman.

Sara: (...) well, now that we are talking about legislation at the University, There is something that bothers me a lot, and I believe it comes from another time. It is about medical insurance. Men can affiliate all his family but the woman can only affiliate her husband. I really appreciate the legislation at the university that allows for women to have a maternity leave, that means, you can work, because in the Public Health services in Mexico you have to leave one month and a half before the birth of the child and to return one month and a half later, but the university has a flexible time in which you can decide to take the 90 days whenever you consider it necessary, I really appreciate that they do not makes us leave until the doctor considers it that we have to leave, because one day with a baby is one day, and three months with the baby or less than three months with the baby is almost nothing (...) It is the legislation in Mexico that it is inadequate it is not the university, because the employment laws in Mexico do not consider that one month and a half with a baby it's not enough time. It is inhuman to leave a baby after a month and a half. In other countries such as Canada, the parents have one year of leave and the time can be divided between the man and woman, and that is correct. But, what about Mexico? Where are we at? We are in hell. I think it's nothing to do with the university, I think it's in general how we see women's rights to be women.

Conclusions

Next, the synthesized conclusions about the findings in this research are presented.

For the teachers it is clear that time for leisure and well being depends on the demands of all aspects in life, for example the demands of their children, to achieve professional goals or the excessive paid work. Although in critical times it is desirable to spend some time for relaxation, they are not affected in their functions if they do not take any time off.

The participants continue to play the roles originally related to the housework and care of the family, sometimes distributing it among the members of the family or doing it on their own. It is also difficult to convince the other members of the family to do their part in the housework. Most of the participants interviewed assume that the partner's role is that of a "helper", rather than being co-responsible. There is a noticeable change in the ideas about equality among men and women.

Life together, as a couple, is one of the aspect that the participants neglect the most, immediately after personal aspects, even though the participants said that they are satisfied in this aspect, maybe because they consider that their attention should be focused on the job and the family, as naturally accepted through the transmission of the education based on traditional gender stereotypes.

Paid work is, for every participant, the aspect they dedicate the most time, spending 8 hours or more at the workplace, even taking work to their homes. Evidently there is a commitment to comply with the demand of their jobs, even when they have to sacrifice time for other roles or for resting. On the other hand it is noticeable that the participants come to agreements with their supervisors, who, in recognition for their dedication and commitment, allow them to have flexible work schedules, permits and special leaves, etc.

However the excess in workload has had a negative effect in their health such as stress and physical wear out, increase in weight, metabolic disorders, among others.

Among the strategies that help them balance, the participants said to use date planners as a guide to organize their daily activities, as well as the support networks (family and friends) that help them with the care of children when they are unable to do that. Most of them are able to hire domestic work helpers to assist them in the housework, whenever they can afford it.

The participants ignore the existence of policies or legal mechanisms to help them conciliate. Those who are mothers talk about the benefits they receive from the employers (individual agreements) that help them concentrate in their role as worker, but they questioned the lack of attention from the federal authorities regarding the equality among men and women, such as maternity/paternity leaves.

Finally the findings show that the balance of the roles played by women in their work, family and personal life, are the result of individual negotiations, that have allow them to dedicate the time to the role that demands more attention, time and effort, depending on the situation. The lack of conciliation policies is not a sole matter of labor organizations, but it is, no doubt, the recognition of the multiple roles that women play and to promote a healthy balance of them. To keep people, who are satisfied, whole and balanced in the different aspects of life, guarantee a job well done and the social recognition of the organizations.

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