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Challenges and Prospects for Women Teachers: Gender Stereotypes, Work Life Balance and Policy Implications

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Abstract:

Women teachers play a crucial role in shaping the educational landscape, contributing significantly to student development and academic success. The increasing participation of women in the teaching profession not only empowers them but also creates many challenges for them in school, family and society. These include gender bias, workplace discrimination, limited career advancement opportunities, societal expectations and safety concerns. Apart from all this, they have the big challenge of how to manage their family needs and job responsibilities (work-life balance) and how they will handle the new generation in their lap. The employment of women in economic activity has several beneficial impacts on improving the economic condition of the family. At the same time, women teachers encounter difficulties in balancing family responsibilities with professional commitments, particularly when they are required to work beyond normal working hours. These competing responsibilities may contribute to mental stress and affect their professional and personal well-being. This article examines the major problems faced by women teachers and explores the prospects for improving their working conditions. It adopts a descriptive review approach based on existing literature, reports and policy documents, and uses the European experience as a comparative reference. The discussion covers the position of women in the teaching profession in Europe, the features that distinguish teaching from other professions, women's struggle to enter and to remain in the profession, gender stereotypes, work–life balance, economic conditions and job security, workplace safety, the alarming crises facing the profession, gender-inclusive environments, family-friendly policies and professional development. The article emphasises that institutional support, equal opportunities and shared family responsibilities are essential for strengthening women's participation in the teaching profession. It further suggests that family-friendly policies, gender-inclusive environments and professional development opportunities can significantly enhance the prospects of women teachers, contributing to a more equitable and progressive educational system.

Keywords: Women teachers, teaching profession in Europe, Job security, Work-life balance, Family-friendly policies, Gender equality, Professional development.

1. Introduction:

Education is a key aspect of society. It is often said that "The destiny of India is being shaped in her classroom." (Education Commission, 1964-66). Female teachers are integral to the moulding of children's personalities and futures. Globally, women accounted for 68% of primary, 58% of lower secondary and 52% of upper secondary teachers. (UNESCO, 2023). Within India, women formed 53.3% of the teaching workforce in 2023-24. (Ministry of Education, 2024). Women's involvement in education is continuously increasing and so it is important to analyse both the power that this brings as well as the issues faced by female teachers. Women commonly face issues in relation to gender stereotyping, gender discrimination, career progression and there are social and safety related concerns that also apply.

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Issues relating to money include low pay and inequitable allowances. There are also no financial rewards or encouragements for extra work. (T. Selvam, 2019). Women must negotiate a work/life balance and need to consider how to manage the new generation in her lap. Furthermore, her own child requires the same care as other children will receive within school. As Napoleon Bonaparte asserted, "Give me an educated mother, I shall promise you the birth of a civilized educated Nation"'. Such issues do affect women teachers' careers and can also affect their wellbeing. Good quality teachers produce a good quality education system. (Farooq, 2017). Women teachers can offer distinctive skills including caring, tenacity and creativity which provide promising avenues for improving education.

Whilst the issue explored in this article relates particularly to India, female teachers have also been increasingly prevalent in Europe. Within this region too, women have had to progressively assert their right to work as teachers. Furthermore, they have needed to maintain this right following marriage and have also needed to strive for and obtain positions of leadership. By analysing the situation in Europe we can therefore assess which aspects of the female teacher experience are pertinent to India, and which relate to the teaching profession generally. This article explores how teaching is distinct from other professions, the extent to which women have fought for and continue to fight for entry to and continued involvement in this profession and which current issues are particularly concerning.

As well as educating, female teachers are involved in developing children's emotional, social and moral development. It is essential that the valuable part played by women teachers is acknowledged, valued and that they have equal access to career progression. Educational bodies, together with government and society as a whole should address the issues that arise from women's career and family commitments. Therefore, this article analyses the various issues impacting on female teachers, compares these to the European experience and then explores ways in which improvements can be made in this area.

2. Theoretical background

This article is informed by knowledge around gender roles, women's empowerment, work-life balance and professional equality. These concepts provide a foundation for examining the challenges and difficulties experienced by women teaches in balancing their profession, family and professional responsibilities.

2.1 Gender roles and Social Experience: Gender roles dictate how men and women divide up roles in both families and society. Desai and Andrist (2010) explore gender scripting within India and so illustrate how social expectations can affect women's lives. Further to this, within teaching, women can additionally be expected to undertake further family and caring roles despite working.

2.2 Women's Empowerment and Economic Independence: Women's empowerment includes financial independence, access to opportunity and decision making, as well as societal value. Kabeer (2016) analyses the link between gender equality, economic development and women's empowerment. As well as offering financial rewards, women's careers should therefore afford them autonomy and also enable them to develop.

2.3 Work-Life Balance: Work/life balance is concerned with effectively combining career life with personal and family life. Research undertaken by both Priya (2017) and Günçavdi et al. (2017) explores how women combine their careers with their personal and family lives. Again, this area is highly relevant to female teachers as they must integrate their teaching, family and caring roles.

2.4 Equality in professional development and leadership: Equality in these areas is an important aspect of career equality. Women should have equal access to educational events, training, school management and leadership. An individual's professional capabilities should be recognised based on their qualification, skill set and performance – not on gender. Together then, these theories allow a consideration of the issues and potential for improvement in the lives of women teachers. Rather than focussing on individuals, they illustrate the wider social, economic and institutional factors which affect women teachers.

3. Methodology

A descriptive and analytical analysis is utilised within this article. Secondary data is sourced from academic research, articles and reports and is detailed within my reference list. Eurostat and OECD publications are analysed for statistical information relating to Europe. This is undertaken for comparative purposes and not as part of a structured international analysis. Data from different sources and for different educational stages is also for differing years and so should not be directly compared.

4. Findings and discussion:

After analysing relevant literature and policy documents, a range of issues can be identified which affect women teachers. Initially, the European experience of female teachers is analysed. Subsequently, distinctions between the teaching profession and other professions are explored along with the extent to which women have had to and still have to fight for involvement in this profession. Issues including gender stereotyping, work/life balance, economics, job security and safety are then analysed. Finally, inclusive environments, family friendly provisions and equality in professional development are discussed.

4.1 Women in the Teaching Profession in Europe: Teaching is amongst the most feminised professions within the European labour market. In 2023, 85.8% of primary teachers and 95.1% of pre-primary teachers within the European Union were female. (Eurostat, n.d.-a; Eurostat, 2026). Across OECD nations, in 2024, women were on average 70% of lower secondary teachers. Within Estonia, the figure was 84%. (OECD, 2025). Typically, the percentage of women teachers reduces as the educational stage becomes more advanced and is further reduced within vocational as opposed to general education (OECD, 2021). Moreover, tertiary-level students studying for an education-related qualification are predominantly female. In 2023, women accounted for around 79% of such students in the European Union. (Eurostat, n.d.-b).

This situation has developed historically. During the nineteenth century as European nations established compulsory basic education, women were heavily engaged in teaching as looking after young children was seen as an extension of women's natural role. Women could also be hired for a cheaper rate than men. (Apple, 1985). Nevertheless, there were restrictions on women's involvement in teaching. For example, in Great Britain many local education bodies insisted that women teachers must relinquish their posts upon marriage. This was abolished by the Education Act 1944. Similarly, in Ireland women who graduated as primary teachers after 1932 were obliged to retire from teaching upon marriage. This regulation was not lifted until 1958. (Redmond & Harford, 2010). Thus it is evident that historically a woman's teaching career was often dependent on her marital status.

Currently, the legal status of women teachers in Europe is considerably more favourable. The European Union has legislation which ensures that women are entitled to a minimum of 14 weeks' uninterrupted maternity leave. (Council of the European Communities, 1992). Furthermore, the Work-Life Balance Directive (2019) confers on fathers the right to take paternity leave and both parents are able to take parental leave. However, only a portion

of this can be passed on to the other parent. (European Parliament & Council of the European Union, 2019). Significantly in the context of this article, this emphasises that both parents share the caring function and it is no longer solely women's responsibility.

Despite women's preponderance within teaching, equality has not necessarily followed. The Global Report on Teachers identifies that women are under-represented in some disciplines, educational stages and in leadership. (UNESCO & Teacher Task Force, 2024). Within Europe, the teaching workforce is also ageing. Of primary teachers in the EU, 37.6% were aged 50 or older in 2023 and only 19.6% were aged under 35. (Eurostat, n.d.-a). These statistics suggest two key lessons for India. Firstly, although women should be encouraged to enter teaching, their occupational rights must be safeguarded. Secondly, if a high proportion of teachers are female then an equivalent proportion of women should hold leadership positions.

4.2 Teaching and Other Professions: What Makes the Difference?: Teaching resembles medicine, law or engineering in that it requires formal qualification and a code of professional conduct. Yet the way in which it is organised makes the experience of women in teaching different from their experience in many other occupations. Table 1 summarises the main differences.

Table 1: Teaching compared with many other Professions

Aspect	Teaching	Many other professions
Nature of work	Continuous emotional labour: the teacher manages the feelings, behaviour and learning of a whole class every day (Hochschild, 1983; Hargreaves, 1998).	Emotional demands are often limited to particular interactions with a client or patient.
Working time	Fixed by the school timetable and calendar; a class cannot be postponed. Planning, marking and records add unseen hours at home.	Greater scope to reschedule tasks, and extra hours are more often recorded.
Career structure	Flat: the work of a teacher at 30 and at 55 is largely the same, and headship posts are few (Lortie, 1975).	Several steps of promotion, specialisation and income growth.
Pay and status	Salaries are lower than those of other tertiary-educated workers (81–95% in OECD countries; OECD, 2023), and the work is labelled "caring" and "women's work".	Higher pay in male-dominated fields such as engineering and technology.
Responsibility	Moral and social responsibility for the emotional, social and moral development of children, with accountability to parents, management and the state.	Accountability is mainly to the employer or client.
Entry and security	Professional qualification and eligibility tests are required (in India, the B.Ed. and TET). Permanent posts are secure, but private and contractual posts are not.	Entry routes are more varied, and security differs from field to field.

Two points need to be stressed. Many women are attracted to teaching for the school calendar and school day. However, unlike other professions, women cannot change or hold classes at home and there is also home-based marking, lesson preparation and evaluation. Further, as teaching is viewed as a form of motherhood, the qualities that teachers need – such as patience, empathy and care – are seen as intrinsic, feminine attributes. Consequently,

women are not well rewarded for possessing these skills (Apple, 1985; Hargreaves, 1998). Teaching is therefore simultaneously respected and yet undervalued.

Struggle to enter the profession. Previously in Europe, women struggled to become teachers due to a lack of training and because of marriage prohibitions – forcing a choice to be made between a woman's career and marriage. Similarly, in India, there was once debate about whether girls could even be taught. Savitribai Phule is recognised as India's first female teacher and began to teach girls in Pune's Bhidewada in 1848. It is remembered that she would carry an extra sari with her as she walked to school as people used to pelt her with stones and dung (Press Trust of India, 2020). Clearly then, early female teachers had to overcome societal obstacles to become teachers.

Whilst a qualification is necessary for teaching, women often face further struggles. Families may not allow their daughters to travel for training (see section 4.3). Girls from poor, rural and conservative backgrounds continue to struggle to receive quality education and so progress to teaching. Moreover, women frequently attempt to undertake the entry requirements for teaching – for example, a B.Ed degree and Teachers' Eligibility Test (TET) – around the same age that they also face pressure to marry and have children. Women commonly commence their teaching careers in private schools. Unfortunately, in such schools, salaries and allowances are frequently unsatisfactory (Selvam, 2019).

Struggle after entering the profession. Whilst entry into teaching does pose women with difficulties, the nature of these difficulties is then altered. Women must strive to succeed in a profession in which progression is slow and where more men tend to occupy management positions. Furthermore, as highlighted in sections 4.3 and 4.4, women are frequently expected to undertake additional voluntary work. They frequently have both a school and home workload and often do not receive sufficient family backing (Nath, 2008). Added to these difficulties are those relating to work-place safety (section 4.6), as well as the uncertain nature of private and contractual employment (section 4.5). Together with restricted training provision (section 4.10), this adds to the difficulties faced by women teachers. In Europe, we can see a pattern – women have first fought for, and then for the right to continue, to teach after marriage. Currently, they are still striving for the opportunity to occupy management roles. As in Europe, the post-entry struggles that women face in India are at least as great as those they previously encountered in entering teaching.

4.3 Gender Stereotypes and Biases: Women teachers are greatly influenced by gender stereotypes. Teaching is often considered a "caring profession" and is therefore seen as apt for women, based on society's views regarding the latter's maternal role. Although this encourages many women to enter teaching, it also results in the profession being undervalued. Consequently, it is generally less highly paid than male-dominant sectors such as engineering and technology.

Despite the NEP 2020's focus on equality and inclusivity, gender bias persists and adversely affects women teachers. Often, women are subject to gender bias during the recruitment, promotion and working experiences that they encounter. Based on stereotypical beliefs that women possess innate caring skills, they are frequently expected to undertake additional voluntary work, such as arranging school events and offering pastoral care to pupils.

Whilst Viksit Bharat discusses how female student numbers are set to rise by 28% over the next 10 years and 43% of female students are predicted to study in STEM areas, women are still widely believed to be less capable than

men, particularly in more mathematically and scientifically orientated subjects. Such gender bias can in turn impact upon women's confidence and their career progression.

Women wishing to become teachers can also face societal prejudice and discrimination. They are often unable to travel for training. Moreover, women living in rural or semi-urban locations and/or conservative communities are typically stereotyped as "overambitious" and/or too lax in relation to their familial duties. This can consequently lower women's motivation and job satisfaction. Ultimately this affects their performance and career progression and can also foster an unwelcoming environment and thus discourage women from becoming and/or continuing to be teachers.

4.4 Cultural Expectations and Work-Life Balance: Societal and cultural norms greatly affect women teachers' experiences. Typically, in many societies women are seen as mainly responsible for looking after a household and men are viewed as the main earners. Men are also usually regarded as those making key decisions, with women fulfilling a maternal role. Women teachers often therefore experience a "double burden" in that they must juggle their careers with housework and family care.

Although most women select teaching as a career so that they can effectively manage both work and family lives, this profession is highly time-consuming. Teachers must devote time to lesson preparation, marking and after school activities. Considerable family support is crucial to assist women in successfully handling both a school and home workload (Nath, 2008).

Unfortunately, only a limited number of women receive backing from their partner and family. Frequently, women forego meals and do not have sufficient time to relax and exercise. However, due to their multi-tasking skills, women endeavour to competently manage all these areas. They are therefore prone to suffer from health and psychological issues.

Whilst consideration of work-life balance should centre on married women, single women may also have family duties to fulfil. These include looking after parents, siblings and/or other family members. Therefore, family support and an even division of housework is pertinent for women teachers, irrespective of marital status.

4.5 Economic Conditions and Job Security: Women's involvement in economic activity brings about numerous positive effects for both family and national economies. Teachers' average salaries in OECD countries were found to range from 81% to 95% of those of tertiary educated workers (OECD, 2023). Again, note that this data refers to teachers as a profession and does not specifically identify any gender salary differential. It should therefore not be understood as demonstrating that women teachers earn between 10-20% less than comparably qualified men (OECD, 2023).

Governments and educational bodies should ensure that men and women teachers receive equal pay for equal work. Additional employee benefits, such as housing concessions and pensions, should also be offered. Women will then be recognised and valued. In tandem with economic independence, just and appropriate payment and job security are important. Poor pay and unequal employee benefits may undermine the economic empowerment that is anticipated to result from women's professional engagement.

As mentioned above, economic circumstances are inextricably linked to employment security. For many women, job security, a regular work-day and (for government sector workers) a pension and other social security benefits are key factors that attract them to becoming teachers. Permanent employment provides women and their families

with a degree of financial security that is rarely available in other female accessible professions. Nevertheless, not all women teachers enjoy equal levels of job security. Many are employed in either private or contractual positions. Not only are salaries in these roles low (Selvam, 2019), but often the extra employee benefits that permanent staff receive are also absent.

Employment security is furthermore a concern for permanently employed teachers. In September 2025, the Supreme Court of India ruled that in-service teachers appointed prior to the RTE Act 2009 and with more than 5 years' service are required to qualify for the Teachers' Eligibility Test (TET). Failure to do so will result in their compulsory retirement (Anjuman Ishaat-e-Taleem Trust v. State of Maharashtra, 2025). In May 2026, the Court rejected review petitions and extended the deadline for qualifying to 31 August 2028 (LiveLaw, 2026). This ruling is applicable to both men and women. Women may find it especially challenging to prepare for examinations whilst managing their "double burden" (see section 4.5). Conversely, in Europe, job security largely stems from statutory regulation. For instance, maternity and parental leave provisions detailed in section 4.1 are applicable to all employees.

4.6 Workplace Harassment and Safety Concerns: Over recent years, there have been numerous reports and studies regarding escalating concerns about women's safety, dignity and psychological wellbeing in Indian society. These are highly relevant to women teachers, as they operate within comparable societal and institutional settings. Recently, there continues to be a high incidence of crime against women. In India, over 4,45,000 such cases were reported in 2022. Gender-based violence is persistently prevalent. The NFHS-5 indicated that 29.2% of ever-married women aged between 18 and 49 had experienced spousal violence. This relates to either physical or sexual abuse by a husband and should not therefore be taken as an indication of the extent of women teachers' experiences of workplace harassment. (International Institute for Population Sciences [IIPS] & Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2021).

Furthermore, extensive surveys indicate that around 32% of ever-married women have suffered physical, sexual and / or psychological violence at some point in their lives. This highlights enduring societal inequities. Women teachers are indirectly affected by such conditions as they exist within the wider society and institutional environment. The National Crime Records Bureau documented 445,256 crimes against women in India in 2022. Please note that this data reflects nationwide crime reporting and does not specifically relate to crimes against women teachers. (National Crime Records Bureau [NCRB], 2023).

Workplace safety is also of great importance. Recently, 254 cases of sexual harassment in the workplace were officially reported in 2025 via the SHe-Box portal. However, experts believe that this does not represent the true extent of such incidents as many are not reported. Indeed, studies suggest that just one third of harassment cases are formally reported. There is therefore a substantial discrepancy between actual and officially recorded statistics. Usually, this is attributable to women's concerns about societal prejudice, job security and/or ignorance of their legal entitlements.

Few women are aware of the SHe-Box portal. Women can utilise this to report workplace sexual harassment. Psychological wellbeing has also increasingly come to the fore in recent years. Women – including teachers – often suffer from stress, burn-out and psychological fatigue as a consequence of their dual work and family roles. Post-pandemic, these stresses have been further exacerbated by heightened work and digital demands. Within the education sector, recent emphasis has been placed by bodies such as the National Commission for Women (NCW) on the importance of rigorously enforcing the POSH Act alongside developing improved safety measures within

educational establishments. Clearly, there are continuing inadequacies in ensuring that women professionals can work in secure environments.

Above all, these modern issues illustrate that, despite relevant legislation and policy, women – including teachers – continue to encounter significant safety, equality and psychological wellbeing challenges. CERT-In, in conjunction with the Ministry of Home Affairs, runs awareness-raising campaigns concerning cyber security for women.

One such initiative has been the publication of a ***'Cyber Security Handbook for Mahila Suraksha'***. Alongside policy reform, awareness must be raised and bodies held accountable. An environment should also be cultivated wherein women teachers feel confident in bringing up issues without fear of facing discrimination and/or adverse career-related outcomes.

4.7 Alarming Crises in the Teaching Profession: Overall, the aforementioned issues imply that the teaching profession is currently encountering significant issues. Five of these are particularly serious.

- **Shortage of Teacher**. UNESCO has estimated that a further 44 million primary and secondary teachers globally are required to attain universal primary and secondary education by 2030. UNESCO also identifies a declining appeal for this profession (UNESCO & Teacher Task Force, 2024). As the majority of teachers are women, each female teacher that exits the profession for reasons such as stress, job insecurity and/or a lack of support exacerbates this shortage.
- **Women teachers' stress, burn-out and poor health.** As outlined in section 4.5 and concluded within this article, women teachers often experience stress, fatigue, anxiety and depression as a result of their "double burden". Furthermore, post-pandemic, such stress has been further compounded by increased work and digital demands.
- **Unsafe working environments.** As discussed in section 4.7, many women teachers are currently unable to work in dignified and secure environments. This is due to factors such as sexual harassment, under-reporting of harassment and low awareness of the SHe-Box and POSH Acts.
- **Job insecurity.** Women are already heavily burdened and uncertainties arise from both the low pay of private and contractual employment and the newly introduced mandatory TET qualification requirement for in-service teachers (see section 4.6).
- **Leadership and appreciation deficit.** Although women predominate within the teaching profession in many countries, they are under-represented in leadership roles (UNESCO & Teacher Task Force, 2024). Teaching is often also not as highly valued as other professions requiring similar qualifications. As explained in section 4.2, teaching is viewed as naturally fitting within women's maternal role. Thus, as a poorly appreciated profession, teaching can be challenging to attract and retain high calibre individuals. As previously stated, these various issues are inter-linked. Poor and/or insecure working environments can cause stress. Women can then depart the profession and so the teacher shortage worsens. Consequently, these issues should be tackled collectively rather than separately.

4.8 Gender Inclusivity: Viksit Bharat has ambitions for an India in which women are empowered, respected and equally involved in the nation's development. This concurs with global objectives such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specifically, Goal 5 (Gender Equality) ensures that no Indian woman is left behind as the country progresses towards developed nation status.

Analysis of the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2021-22 reveals that, in India, women continue to be under-represented within the higher education teaching workforce when compared to men. Nationally, 43.4% of faculty were female and 56.6% were male. This gender imbalance is also apparent in Bihar, where state-wise AISHE data indicated that there were 28,896 male and 9,256 female teachers. Thus, in this state, approximately 75.74% of teachers were men and 24.26% were women – identifying a considerable gender imbalance within Bihar's higher education teaching workforce. (Ministry of Education, 2024) Although female participation in higher education has risen over recent years, these data emphasise the necessity to further enhance women's involvement and professional prospects in this sector.

"Nonetheless, gender equality cannot simply be attained by ensuring that both genders have equivalent educational and occupational access. Equitable sharing of housework is also vital. Rather than solely women undertaking housework, both husbands and wives should contribute."

Only then can the vision of ***"Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas"*** truly be realised, with equality and shared responsibility manifest within both societal and familial contexts. Gender inclusivity entails equal involvement in professional, institutional and leadership endeavours. Hence, gender equality needs to be not just theoretically, but practically, reflected in domestic, educational and societal settings.

4.9 Family Friendly Policies: As previously mentioned, most women enter teaching so that they can effectively manage their careers and families. Unfortunately, current work-related demands are so intense that women are unable to sufficiently attend to their homes and families. The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act 2017 increased maternity leave to 26 weeks and stipulated that organisations employing 50 or more people must establish childcare (creche) provisions for working mothers. (Government of India, 2017; Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2017). Nevertheless, such childcare is not usually available in schools. Furthermore, the percentage of Indian women who have undergone C-sections rose from 17.2% in 2016 to 21.5% in 2021 (BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth, 2023). Even after a natural birth, it typically takes a minimum of 4-6 weeks for a woman to fully recover. Can she really manage this within only six months of maternity leave? Or must she?

The government ought to implement similar family friendly policies for women teachers.

- **Flexi-time:** Women teachers with young children should be permitted to arrive at, and leave from, school one hour later and earlier respectively.
- **Maternity leave:** Women should be granted maternity leave six months prior to, and three months following, giving birth.
- **Childcare:** There should be at least one creche in each block of every district.

Such policies can facilitate women in successfully managing work and family commitments. They can in turn decrease stress and boost job satisfaction. In addition to the aforementioned policies, educational institutions should also consider suitable leave policies, foster a supportive working environment and ensure an equitable division of professional work. Current maternity and childcare provisions should furthermore be monitored. Family friendly policies should support women but not impede their professional prospects and career development.

4.10 Professional Development: Many female teachers can lack appropriate staff development provision due to constraints in time, and/or lack of resources and/or institutional backing. If this is the case then women can struggle to continue to be informed of and involved in developments and innovations within education. Whilst in

many societies people wish for their daughters to be looked after and educated by female nurses and teachers, there is often extreme dislike for women and girls engaging with education and services (Selvam, 2019). Often women are steered into occupations which are perceived as an extension of their caring role for example; teaching young children. Such initiatives can assist in dismantling the glass ceiling and further gender equality in educational leadership.

"Although most teachers are female, women face challenges to climbing the leadership ladder in education, just as they do in all professions. This must change. You cannot be what you cannot see: more women in education leadership would help stop gender stereotyping, and inspire girls to go further, creating a virtuous cycle of benefits for society at large."

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Women teachers should be provided with the same access to staff development, research, educational conferences, educational management and leadership provision. Women entering leadership roles can then further combat gender stereotyping and in turn motivate girls to expand their educational and career horizons.

5. Educational implications

There are several important educational implications arising from the issues and potential solutions for women teachers. Educational institutions need to guarantee equity, value and appropriately allocate work for women teachers and also provide a non-discriminatory and non-harassing environment. Governments and policy makers need to successfully execute policy on occupational health, state maternity provision, job security, equal pay and staff development. Alongside this, within families and in society as a whole, it is crucial that responsibilities within the home are appropriately shared, that women's career goals are supported and that gender stereotyping is actively combated. Teachers should also be provided with adequate time, staff development provision and equitable access to qualification routes (for example, TET). Appropriate workloads, work/life balance, mentorship and emotional support can all add to women teachers' job satisfaction and thus positively affect their teaching. Combined action is required from all aforementioned groups to foster gender equality, and in addition to enhance teachers' wellbeing and educational quality.

6. Conclusion:

Female teachers are fundamental for moulding future society. Despite this, women teachers encounter numerous issues which can affect their careers (UNESCO, 2022). Combining policies and instigating societal change can effectively deal with diverse issues which include gender stereotyping, health and work/life balance. (World Bank, 2022). Whilst women are expected to continue to undertake historically female roles within the home, they are also required to succeed within their careers. This can prove highly demanding and can impede women's capacity to excel within both spheres. Reducedly addressing adverse elements in this situation can heighten women teachers' awareness and sense of responsibility.

Cultivating a positive disposition towards teaching can stimulate innovation and furthermore stimulate learners (Celiköz & Çetin, 2014). Teachers are more inclined to further concentrate on and commit themselves to their work if they are enthusiastic and derive pleasure from their occupation. Consequently, high calibre work is produced and superior performance is attained. However, extended working hours, high pressure and insufficient

support can cause a variety of health concerns for teachers such as anxiety, depression and long-term conditions. Unduly high expectations are frequently placed upon teachers and unfortunately insufficient attention is paid to teachers' issues (Chopra, 2018).

As well as being teachers, women are also mothers to future generations. Therefore, the plethora of duties that they must undertake is of high importance. Unidirectional analysis from a demographic perspective is perilous. Comparing men and women on one or two criteria is unwise as men and women operate within different biological, mental and societal roles. It should unquestionably be regarded as an emergency if a case concerning a woman teacher arises. Predominantly, alterations to policies to resolve issues for women centre on reprimanding rather than rewarding and monitoring mechanisms.

Those facilitating women teachers should be rewarded. Moreover, a diverse and enduring strategy is essential to ensure that all individuals can effortlessly endure. For Viksit Bharat to materialise, it is crucial that these inequities are tackled and that women teachers can exist within a balanced environment within the teaching profession. Supporting and empowering women teachers is key in order to foster sustainable development and educational excellence (UN Women, 2023).

As demonstrated in comparison with Europe, women teacher issues are not exclusive to one nation. Historically, in both areas, women became teachers as it was thought that this career was appropriate for them. Both European and European nations faced difficulty in obtaining and then retaining permission to continue to teach following marriage and also in gaining appreciation and leadership roles.

Education is distinctive from other industries as it entails high levels of emotional labour. Furthermore, teaching hours are both set and somewhat concealed. Education also has a horizontal career progression and is underpaid. Thus, the dual load for women teachers is further intensified. Issues surrounding teacher supply, pressure, health, job insecurity and the absence of women in leadership are inter-connected. Without job security, equitable pay, a healthy working environment and shared domestic duties, these issues cannot be resolved.

Whilst women's workforce involvement is an important element of their empowerment, so too is ensuring them with equal professional value, a healthy workplace, financial autonomy, leadership prospects and assistance in relation to domestic duties. Educational establishments, government bodies, families and society as a whole must collaborate to enable women teachers to successfully realise their career goals, without superfluous gender obstacles. Furthering women teachers' status will not only benefit their own development but will also aid the construction of a fairer and more progressive educational system.

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