

Socio-professional Antecedents of Conciliation between Work and Family Role among Tunisian Physical Education Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Background: Balancing work and family are an important issue these days, as demands and commitments in both contexts have increased. **Aims:** The aim of this study was to study the issue of family-work balance among Tunisian physical education teachers, and to identify the differences between men and women as well as the main factors influencing the relationship family-work. **Method:** 486 physical education teachers (342 men, mean age = 42.35 ± 5.554 , and 144 women, mean age = 42.80 ± 7.708) belonging to three Tunisian governorates participated voluntarily to our study. **Results:** The results obtained from the MANOVA analysis showed the impact of gender and family status on reconciliation (Gender: [Lambda of Wilks = ,978 < 1, D = 3,551, p = 0,014 < p = 0,05]; Marital status: [Lambda de Wilks = ,906 < 1, d = 8,134, p = 0,000 < p = 0,05]), but work place had no effect: [Wilks' Lambda = ,990 < 1, D = ,830, p = 0.546 > p = 0.05]. **Conclusion:** Our statement therefore underlines the fact that the work-family conflict is very present among PE teachers in the south-western of Tunisia, contrary to the image perceived by society which provides that teachers have a working time that allows them to live comfortably.

Keywords: Conciliation, Work, Family life, Physical Education Teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Attention to the right balance has become a priority for all workers in the context of a busy daily life and an accelerated pace. The development of modern societies where individuals are confronted with infinity of social constraints, whether on the family or professional level, generates a lack of synchronization between the times allocated to each activity of life. Most workers are affected by this problem of management and the temporal balance of the two spheres of life. The issue is of a social nature and the distribution of time devoted to each activity has become crucial.

The existing literature testifies to a strong interference between the professional sphere and the private one, that describes as a striking fact of modern society which affects all workers in an overlap of different social times [1-9].

Between work requirements, family obligations and free time, the day is made up of a succession of temporal axes devoted to various social activities which follow one another, overlap, and converge in the quest for a balance that is sometimes difficult to achieve. It also reveals that workers find it difficult to reconcile professional commitments with family ones. This problem has arisen at a time when dual-career couples now constitute the structure of most families, which is the case for a considerable number of citizens, thanks to the emancipation of women and its presence in the labor market.

This situation can lead to a desynchronization or even a conflictual relationship that has been defined by Greenhaus and Beutell [1] as "the incompatibility between the demands of the job and the demands of the family, so that participation in a sphere makes it difficult to engage in the other sphere". This imposes the obligation to find adequacy to facilitate the interaction between the various activities of life within the framework of the reconciliation of the different social times. The cohabitation and interaction of the two parts of family and professional life are irrevocable, as illustrated by Barrère-Maurisson [10]. According to her, "these two parts of life are constantly reflected in the home and in society. In the home, between man and woman, between domestic and professional. In society, between employers and employees, between work and family burdens. This is why any action affecting one of the poles affects the other and vice versa. This then imposes a search for a balance and an interaction between these two spheres of life which intersect and become confused because they are "time-consuming". In this context and given the importance of the balance between the time devoted to work and that for the family, we will try through this study, to identify the family-work balance among Tunisian physical education teachers, and to explore the differences between men and women, as well as the main factors influencing the family-work relationship.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

This is a field survey of physical education teachers working in the south-west of Tunisia. This survey is based on a quantitative method by questionnaire which aims to reveal whether PE teachers have difficulty reconciling work time and family time according to three variables: gender, family situation and work area.

Study Population

486 physical education teachers (342 men, mean age = 42.35 ± 5.5 , and 144 women, mean age = 42.37 ± 6.3) belonging to three Tunisian governorates as follows: Gafsa 324 teachers with 66.7%

(219 men 105 women), Tozeur 67 teachers with 13.8% (51 men 16 women), and Kebelli 95 teachers with 19.5% (23 women and 72 men) participated voluntarily to our study. (Table 1).

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the population.

Variable		Effective	Mean Age	SD	Pourcentage
Gender	Male	342	42.35	± 5.5	70.4
	Female	144	42.37	± 6.3	29.6
Governorates	Gafsa	324	42.51	± 6.1	66.7
	Tozeur	67	41.96	± 6.0	13.8
	Kébéli	95	42.78	± 6.7	19.5

Measurement

The research data was collected using a questionnaire developed and validated in Arabic according to the steps proposed in the literature and adapted to the cultural and social particularities of the respondents. This scale contains 13 items divided into three components (Solutions that facilitate conciliation (SFC) 4 items ($\alpha = .572$); Factors influencing conciliation (FIC) 5 items ($\alpha = .672$); and Problems due to conciliation (PDC) 4 items ($\alpha = .709$).

The first component with five items presents the factors influencing reconciliation (FIC) corresponds to the elements that lead to difficulties in achieving a balance between family and work. The five items are as follows: “children's school schedule makes work-family balance difficult (HCD)”, “the rhythm of your spouse's work schedule makes work-family balance difficult (RCD)”, “my work schedule makes work-family balance difficult family (TCD)”, “the people in charge in the family (Parent, grandparents...) makes the work-family balance difficult (PCD)”, “in my current situation the work-family balance is difficult (SCD)”.

The second component that measures with four items the problems due to reconciliation (PDC) corresponds to the repercussions of the difficulty of reconciliation. The first item “difficulty of family-work balance is a source of family problems (divorce, argument, etc.) (DCPF)”, the second one, “difficulty of family-work balance is a source of professional problems (absenteeism, failure, abandonment, etc.) (DCPP)”, the third, difficulty of family-work balance postpones marriage (DCM)”, and the fourth item “the difficulty of family-work balance does not help me to take advantage of work opportunities” (DCOT).

The third component measures with four items the solutions that facilitate work-life balance (SFC), corresponds to the measures taken to facilitate the interaction between family and work. The first item is “Family support facilitates work-family balance” (FFC), the second one, “use of day care services facilitates work-family balance” (GFC), the third, “recruitment of a person for housework facilitates work-family balance” (RFC), and the last item “the sharing of family responsibilities with my spouse facilitates work-family balance family” (PFC).

Procedures

The statistical processing of the data was carried out using the SPSS software (20). The method for calculating the means and standard deviations and the sums of the scores for the items was carried out by cross-referencing the independent variables (gender, family situation, persons in charge, and geographical affiliation) with dependent variables such as factors influencing

reconciliation (FIC), problems due to reconciliation (PDC), and solutions that facilitate reconciliation (SFC).

To determine the differences among teachers by gender, family situation, people in charge and by Tunisian south-west governorates affiliations, first of all, we used descriptive analyzes (Mean/Standard deviation), secondly, multivariate analyzes to determine Wilks' Lambda significance effect to test whether there are differences between means of groups of subjects identified on a combination of dependent variables, and thirdly, the inter-subject effect tests by multiple analyzes of variance to test all the existing interactions between the independent and dependent variables.

RESULTS

Trying to find a balance between family and work is a major concern for all workers. This concern is aggravated with the growth in the number of families whose father and mother are active where each of the two partners tries to find solutions to facilitate interaction with the various social activities in a temporal chaos. This conflict between work demands and family obligations causes a desynchronization between the two spheres. Our study is part of this framework with the objective of determining whether PE teachers experience difficulties in joining work and family, revealing the differences between the two sexes in terms of reconciliation as well as seeing the impact of incompatibility between the two spheres and the measures that facilitate better management.

The factors influencing reconciliation (FIC) were measured by five items ($\alpha = .672$), the solutions that facilitate reconciliation (SFC) four items ($\alpha = .572$) and the problems due to reconciliation (PDC) by four items ($\alpha = .709$).

The results obtained from the descriptive analyzes indicate a variety of responses according to the table above at the level of the SFC variable according to gender and marital status variable, while the FIC and PDC variables only show variations at the level of the marital status (Table 2).

Table 2: Mean scores of the dependent variables.

Variable		SFC		FIC		PDC	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Gender	Male	3.54	± 0.64	2.92	± 0.77	2.75	± 0.82
	Female	3.72	± 0.73	3.07	± 0.82	2.94	± 0.72
Marital Status	Maried	3.67	± 0.65	2.97	± 0.81	2.78	± 0.81
	Single	3.16	± 0.65	2.89	± 0.62	2.82	± 0.63
	Divorced	3.39	± 0.58	3	± 0.85	3.32	± 0.74
Workplace	Gafsa	3.58	± 0.67	2.94	± 0.77	2.78	± 0.83
	Tozeur	3.69	± 0.74	2.93	± 0.89	2.86	± 0.78
	Kébéli	3.58	± 0.63	3.07	± 0.76	2.84	± 0.68

To determine the interactions between the dependent and independent variables the MANOVA analysis of variance is necessary. The results obtained from the MANOVA analysis to estimate the interaction effect of gender, marital status and work place reveal the impact of gender and family status on reconciliation (Gender: [Lambda of Wilks = ,978 < 1, D = 3,551, $p = 0,014 < p =$

0,05]; Marital status: [Λ de Wilks = ,906 < 1, $d = 8,134$, $p = 0,000 < p = 0,05$]], but work place had no effect: [Wilks' $\Lambda = .990 < 1$, $D = .830$, $p = 0.546 > p = 0.05$].

The dimensions subject to the gender effect are:

- Solutions that facilitate work-family conciliation (SFC: $D = 6.843$, $p = 0.009$).
- Factors influencing FIC work-family conciliation (FIC: $D = 3.489$, $p = 0.42$).
- Problems due to work-family conciliation (PDC: $D = 5.801$, $p = 0.016$).

The variables subject to the effect of matrimonial situation are:

- Solutions that facilitate work-family conciliation (SFC: $D = 16.927$, $p = 0.000$).
- Problems due to work-family conciliation (PDC: $D = 4.254$, $p = 0.015$) (Table 3).

Table 3: Impact of gender, marital status, and workplace.

Independent variables	Conciliation components	Sum of squares	ddl	Mean of squares	D	Sig	Eta partial squared
Gender	SFC	3,103	1	3,103	6,843	9	14
	FIC	2,192	1	2,192	3,489	42	7
	PDC	3,689	1	3,689	5,801	16	12
Marital status	SFC	14,578	2	7,289	16,927	0	66
	FIC	398	2	199	314	731	1
	PDC	5,391	2	2,695	4,254	15	17
Workplace	SFC	675	2	338	735	480	3
	FIC	1,412	2	706	1,119	327	5
	PDC	500	2	250	388	678	2

For the SFC dimension, several reconciliation measures can be put in place to facilitate interaction between family and work. Teachers were asked about four types of possible solutions in their environment, such as support from the extended family, recourse to childcare services, hiring someone to do the housework and sharing family responsibilities with the spouse (FFC, GFC, RFC, and PFC).

According to the results illustrated, we realize that the use of the four types of measures varies according to the sex of the subjects and their family situations. The solution most appreciated by women is the equitable sharing of family responsibilities with the spouse 73.6% while 72.8% of men prefer the support of the extended family: [Wilks' $\lambda = .978 < 1$, $D = 3.551$, $p = 0.014 < p = 0.05$], inter-subject effect: SFC ($F = 6.843$, $p = 0.009$).

Married teachers who are the majority, 82.3% of them said that sharing responsibilities with the spouse is the best possible solution to facilitate conciliation. Two solutions are similarly appreciated by the divorced, namely the support of the extended family and the use of a housekeeper for a workforce of 57.8%.

For single teachers with family responsibilities, family support is the most approved solution with 60%: [Wilks' $\lambda = .906 < 1$, $d = 8.134$, $p = 0.000 < p = 0.05$], inter effect subjects: CFS ($F = 16.927$, $p = 0.000$).

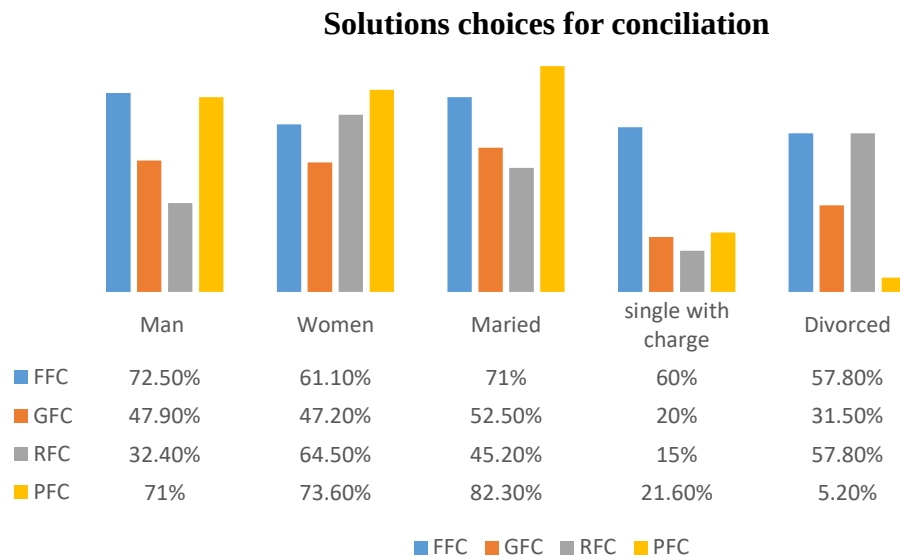


Figure 1: Solutions choices for conciliation.

For the FIC variable, four statements summarizing the factors that can be considered as sources of difficulty for conciliation were proposed to teachers (HCD, RCD, TCD, and CCD) and a statement that measures the difficulty of reconciliation (SCD). The average scores for the SCD variable indicate a value of 3.03, which proves that teachers have difficulty in managing family and professional tasks.

The data reveals that 48.7% (237) said that reconciling family and work is difficult to achieve, while 45.6% (222) found a balance between the two spheres. Women's scores for the SCD variable (3.37) are high compared to those of men (2.88). These scores show that women are the most likely to have difficulty combining professional and personal life with a rate of 66%, however, the rate among men is 41%. The multivariate analysis indicates a significant effect of gender variable on the SCD variable: [Wilks' lambda = 0.948 < 1, D = 5.222, $p = 0.000 < p = 0.05$], SCD inter-subject effect tests ($F = 14.371$, $p = 0.00$).

Many factors can contribute to explaining the difficulties that some parents encounter in reconciling the demands of their family life and those of their professional duties. The conceptual framework adopted for the analysis of this problem suggests that a set of factors must be highlighted to better understand these difficulties. These factors are classified according to those relating to family and those relating to work.

Four statements were proposed to teachers allowing them to understand the difficulty of reconciling family and work and to identify the factors influencing this theme: the time conflict (children's school schedule "HCD", work schedule "TCD" and work schedule of the spouse "RCD"), the tension conflict (persons in charge "PCD").

The explanatory factors of the difficulty of reconciling family and work vary according to the gender variable. The results obtained reveal that the rhythm of the work schedule of the spouse (RCD) is the factor most declared by women with a score of 3.29. Whereas for men, children's schooling (HCD) represents the constraining factor for easy reconciliation with a score of 3.29.

The repercussions of poor management of the work-family balance can have adverse effects on the physical and mental health of individuals, on their family, marital or social life, or even on their performance in their work establishments. On this theme, we will mainly content ourselves with analyzing the links between work-family difficulty and highlighting certain consequences of a family and professional nature.

The results of the multivariate analyze reveal that the problems due to conciliation (CDP) are subject to two factors:

- Gender: [Wilks' lambda = .978 < 1, D = 3.551, $p = 0.014 < p = 0.05$], PDC (F = 5.801, $p = 0.016$).
- Family situation: [Wilks' lambda = .906 < 1, d = 8.134, $p = 0.000 < p = 0.05$], PDC (F = 4.254, $p = 0.015$).

The teachers were asked about four types of problems that can have negative consequences caused by the difficulty of balancing work and family. The problems concern the family are dispute, divorce, and late marriage. The others relate to work: absenteeism, failure, abandonment, and indifference towards work opportunities.

The analyzes of the descriptive statistics show two of the most emanating problems admitted by women: the difficulty of reconciling family obligations with those of work does not allow them to take advantage of work opportunities (DCOT) with a score of 3.06 and the difficulty of family-work balance is a source of family problems (DCPF), with a score of 3.01.

As far as the family situation is concerned, the results indicate that those who have had the experience of divorce claim as a bonus that the reconciliation conflict is a source of family problems (DCPF) with a score of 3.68 [Effect: D = 5.824, $p = 0.003 < 0.05$], in second, the difficulty of family-work balance postpones marriage (DCM) with a score of 3.16 [Effect: D = 3.948, $p = 0.02 < 0.05$]. Finally, the difficulty of balancing does not allow them to take advantage of work opportunities (DCOT) with a score of 3.53 [Effect: D = 3.346, $p = 0.036 < 0.05$].

DISCUSSION

Our study aimed to study the issue of family-work balance among physical education and sport teachers in southwestern Tunisia in order to identify the differences between men and women as well as the main factors influencing the relationship between family and work, also, the consequences of poor management. In order to verify the links between the different explanatory variables, multivariate analyzes (MANOVA) were carried out taking into account gender, marital status, and workplace as independent variables.

The results obtained indicate a proportion of 48.7% of teachers who claimed difficulty in managing the balance between family and work compared to a rate of 45.6% who were able to solve this problem and, 5.7 declared that they were not interested in this problem. These results converge with those of previous studies which have shown that the problem of reconciliation affects all sectors of private or state activity [11, 12]. Indeed, the hypothesis that PE teachers find it difficult to manage the conflict between work and family is confirmed. The descriptive analysis showed that teachers have difficulty maintaining a balance between family obligations and professional responsibilities. This difficulty manifests itself more in women than in men,

which is confirmed by the multivariate analyzes which revealed the existence of statistical links between gender and the difficulty of reconciliation. These results corroborate the findings of previous studies such as those of Morin, Fortier [13], which indicate that women in the majority of cases make concessions to devote themselves to family obligations, and of Barrère-Maurisson [14] who showed that within a bi-active couple, the domestic and parental tasks are mainly assumed by women, which negatively influences the interaction between family and work, also Tremblay [15], denote that active women are the most torn between the two spheres of life since they take more measures that facilitate reconciliation in order to fulfil family obligations. Our statistical results and those illustrated by previous studies make it possible to affirm the hypothesis postulating that the problem of work-family balance would remain a female problem at the highest point despite the similarity of school level and professional time.

Many factors highlighted in previous studies can explain the difficulty in managing work-family. They can be identified in these points: in the family environment the age of the children, the gender of the subject, the support of the spouse, lack of support from the superior in the workplace, the flexible schedule [15]. The number of dependent children also has a significant influence on work-family conflict [2]. The factors proposed to teachers are in the order of children's schooling, spouse's work schedule, work schedule and carers. We notice a difference where our remarks denote that the schooling of the children (HDC) and the work schedule of the spouse (RCD) constitute the two explanatory variables of a bad management of the family-work balance.

To promote a better balance between work and family life, several measures can be put in place: spousal support is highlighted as an important factor in facilitating family-work interaction [8], St-Onge, Renaud [2] confirm that if the number of children is an explanatory variable of work-family conflict, the perception of the support provided by the spouse turns out to be a key variable. Three categories of measures emerged from the study of Nogues and Tremblay [16]: the reduction of working time, flexible working hours and work vacation. These results converge with those of our study where teachers expressed their agreement with an equitable sharing of responsibilities with the spouse (PFC) which promotes good management of the balance between work and family with a rate of 71%. This confirms our hypothesis which claimed that a sharing of responsibilities is an important solution to facilitate reconciliation.

The repercussions of poor management of the work-family balance are diverse. They can be family-related, as illustrated by St-Onge, Renaud [2]. For employees who have a conflict between family demands and professional ones are dissatisfied in both spheres. The consequences are negative, on the physical and mental health of individuals. Boulet and Le Bourdais [8] reveal that having access to measures that facilitate work-family balance reduces the predisposition to psychological distress. On the labor side, failure to reconcile can threaten the professional career of women and make it difficult to access positions and ranks [17].

The hypothesis that work-family conflict has a negative impact on family relations for teachers living in couples or families is supported since the results obtained join those of previous studies. In addition, the results of our study revealed that the difficulty of reconciliation does not allow teachers to take advantage of work opportunities. This can be explained by the deterioration of purchasing power and the increase in family expenses, which pushes them to seek other income to meet increased needs.

CONCLUSION

Our statement therefore underlines the fact that the work-family conflict is very present among PE teachers in the south-western of Tunisia, contrary to the image perceived by society which provides that teachers have a working time that allows them to live comfortably. This work contributes to a better understanding of Tunisian physical education teachers who are struggling to balance work and family life. Moreover, they find it difficult to reconcile the two spheres. This difficulty is claimed more by women than men in the three south western governorates. The schooling of the children and the lack of support from the spouse are the explanatory factors of the difficulty to reach the family-work balance. To overcome this embarrassment, the equitable sharing of responsibilities within the family is the most effective solution to facilitate the interaction of the two spheres.

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