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EXPLORATORY STUDY ON CHALLENGES FACED BY FACULTY MEMBERS

Mohammed Chawre

Research Scholar, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, India

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Keywords	Abstract
Faculty Members, NVIVO 12, Education.	Faculty members are essential to the educational process since they are mentors, researchers, and educators who have a big impact on students' academic and personal development. Since their struggles and experiences have a direct bearing on educational quality and institutional efficacy, it is essential to comprehend their viewpoints. This study is driven by the increasing awareness of how crucial faculty well-being is to creating a positive learning environment. Establishing efficient support systems that improve faculty members' work happiness and general performance requires an understanding of the specific challenges they confront as higher education institutions evolve. The purpose of the study is to explore the challenges faced by faculty members. The technique used in the current study in Text mining technique using qualitative tool NVIVO 12. The outcome of the study indicated that Non-Teaching Responsibilities, Heavy Workload, Physical Health Challenges, Work-Life Balance, Institutional Politics, Excessive Committee Work and Inadequate Compensation are high challenges faced by faculty members, Whereas, Technology Adoption, Job Insecurity, Gender Inequality and Discrimination and Bias are moderate challenges faced by the faculty members.

1. INTRODUCTION

Faculty members play a variety of important roles in influencing students' academic and personal growth in higher education institutions. In addition to providing high-quality instruction, faculty members are important contributors to research, community involvement, and institutional growth. But they frequently deal with a wide range of issues that might impair their productivity, contentment at work, and general well-being. These difficulties have been made worse by the

Chawre Mohammed. (2025). *Exploratory Study on Challenges Faced by Faculty Members. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Reviews, 4(1), 88-94.*

growing complexity of the educational environment, which is being caused by quickening technological development, increased administrative demands, and changing student demographics (Miller, 2020). According to research, these demands may result in fatigue, discontent at work, and eventually a drop in the standard of instruction given (Peters & Smith, 2019).

One of the biggest problems facing faculty members is the excessive workload, which frequently combines teaching, research, and service obligations. Given that educational institutions place a strong emphasis on research output in addition to teaching responsibilities, this multifaceted job can cause a great deal of stress. A faculty member's sense of efficacy and job satisfaction may suffer as a result of feeling overburdened by juggling these conflicting objectives (Hoffman & Johnson, 2021). This intricacy is further compounded by the changing nature of student participation, especially in light of the growing popularity of online and hybrid learning settings. It can be difficult for faculty members to modify their teaching strategies to encourage meaningful engagement and exchanges in these environments, which can leave them feeling inadequate and frustrated (Chen et al., 2021).

Faculty members' professional experience is significantly impacted by the amount of institutional assistance they have access to, in addition to issues with workload and engagement. Faculty retention and satisfaction depend on receiving enough support, whether in the form of research resources, professional development opportunities, or mentorship. Sadly, a large number of faculty members express that they frequently feel alone and underappreciated due to a lack of institutional support (Zhou & Lee, 2020). For teachers in their early careers, who could encounter extra challenges adjusting to the demands of their new positions in academia, this lack of assistance might be especially noticeable.

The purpose of this exploratory study is to look into the particular difficulties that faculty members in higher education institutions confront. By looking at these challenges, the study hopes to add to the body of knowledge already in existence and offer perspectives that might guide institutional policies and procedures meant to improve faculty development and support.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Peter, Ndiangui., Jingshun, et al. (2024):

The purpose of the study was to investigate how foreign faculty members at American higher education institutions dealt with cross-cultural situations and assisted local students. According to the study, foreign faculty members had trouble relating to local professors, staff, and students and comprehending local culture. International instructors were more equipped to handle local issues and empower students at institutions that valued cultural variety, encouraged inclusivity, and offered focused assistance.

2.2 Levi, Padalulu., Tirianus, Malyo. (2024):

Evaluated Okmin University's improvements in instructional strategies and instructional technologies. The study discovered that innovations like curriculum modifications and technology integration had a beneficial effect on the efficacy of instruction. Professional development techniques including training and multidisciplinary cooperation were beneficial to the faculty. Nonetheless, difficulties remained, including mounting workloads, demands on research, and adjusting to changing educational dynamics.

Chawre Mohammed. (2025). *Exploratory Study on Challenges Faced by Faculty Members. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Reviews*, 4(1), 88-94.

2.3 Bhim, Singh. (2024):

Sought to determine and investigate the main issues that Delhi's primary school teachers encounter. According to the report, professors had trouble engaging students, meeting a variety of learning demands, and utilising contemporary teaching techniques. Effective teaching was severely hampered by administrative issues such as restricted resources, bureaucratic restrictions, and high workloads. Socioeconomic issues that further hampered the lecturers' professional tasks included budgetary constraints, societal expectations, and socio-cultural differences.

2.4 Simerjeet, Singh, Bawa., et al. (2024):

Looked examined the difficulties and barriers educators encounter when incorporating information and communication technology (ICT) into the classroom. Although ICT presents many chances for collaboration and improved instruction, the study discovered that teachers encounter major obstacles that prevent its widespread use. A lack of proper training, ethical and legal issues, and reluctance to include supplemental information into conventional teaching techniques were the main challenges.

2.5 Georges, Y. Maalouf, Issam, Jallad. (2023):

Attempted to investigate the difficulties and possibilities faced by new professors in Kuwaiti academic institutions. According to the study, the organizational setting, teaching experience, and expectation alignment were important determinants of new faculty members' successful integration. These elements work together to produce a supportive environment that speeds up adaption.

2.6 Shaista, Noor, et al. (2023):

Intended to investigate the difficulties faculty at the Department of Medical Education (DME) encounter as a result of institutional differences within the department. The DME's hierarchical structure varied greatly, according to the report, with departments having anywhere from one to five faculty members. Lack of qualified, experienced, and trained academics; a lack of infrastructure and support personnel; a lack of money; opposition from the administration and faculty; and the influence of internal and external politics were among the main issues noted.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- (I) To explore the challenges faced by faculty members
- (II) To give appropriate suggestions to reduce these challenges and improve faculty members job satisfaction and productivity.

4. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The current study is qualitative and exploratory. The current study is based on an inductive approach. Face to face interview was conducted of 45 faculty members using non- random convenience sampling techniques. The tool used for the current study was NVIVO 12 and the technique used for the analysis is Text mining Viz. Mind map, word frequency and word cloud.

4.1 Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Table No: 1 Summary table of challenges faced by faculty members

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)
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Chawre Mohammed. (2025). *Exploratory Study on Challenges Faced by Faculty Members. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Reviews, 4(1), 88-94.*

Non-Teaching Responsibilities	11	32	12.70
Heavy Workload	8	30	11.90
Physical Health Challenges	8	29	11.51
Work-Life Balance	8	28	11.11
Institutional Politics	8	26	10.32
Excessive Committee Work	13	22	8.73
Inadequate Compensation	12	21	8.33
Technology Adoption	10	18	7.14
Job Insecurity	10	17	6.75
Gender Inequality	6	15	5.95
Discrimination and Bias	14	14	5.56

As per table no: 1 the most frequent keywords generated towards exploring the challenges faced by faculty members are Non-Teaching Responsibilities with 32 counts and 12.70 weighted percentage, Heavy Workload with 30 counts and 11.90 weighted percentage, Physical Health Challenges with 29 counts and 11.51 weighted percentage, Work-Life Balance with 28 counts and 11.11 weighted percentage, Institutional Politics with 26 counts and 10.32 weighted percentage, Excessive Committee Work with 22 counts and 8.73 weighted percentage, Inadequate Compensation with 21 counts and 8.33 weighted percentage, Technology Adoption with 18 counts and 7.14 weighted percentage, Job Insecurity with 17 counts and 6.75 weighted percentage, Gender Inequality with 15 counts and 5.95 weighted percentage and Discrimination and Bias with 5.56 weighted percentage.

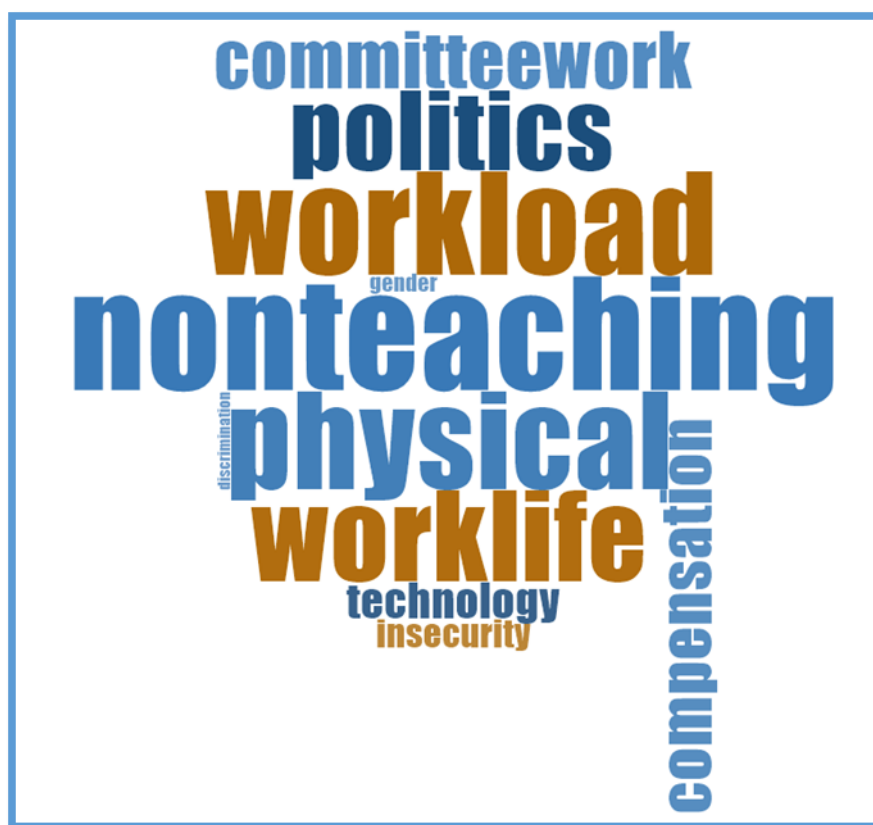


Figure No: 1 Word cloud

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The above figure indicated that Non-Teaching Responsibilities, Heavy Workload, Physical Health Challenges, Work-Life Balance, Institutional Politics, Excessive Committee Work and Inadequate Compensation are high challenges faced by faculty members, Whereas, Technology Adoption, Job Insecurity, Gender Inequality and Discrimination and Bias are moderate challenges faced by the faculty members.

5. CONCLUSION

The research found that faculty members faced several important obstacles, including as non-teaching responsibilities, excessive workloads, physical health problems, problems balancing work and personal life, institutional politics, extensive committee work, and low pay. These difficulties may impair faculty productivity, contentment, and general health, which may ultimately have an impact on the standard of instruction given to pupils. It also emphasized the necessity for institutions to identify and proactively solve mild difficulties like gender inequity, employment uncertainty, and technology uptake. By putting supportive measures in place, educational institutions can create a more favorable atmosphere for teachers, which will improve job satisfaction and improve student learning outcomes.

6. SUGGESTIONS

- Regular evaluations and more equitable workload distribution among faculty members are necessary for institutions to avoid burnout and improve job satisfaction.
- Provide faculty members with time management tools and flexible work schedules to assist them in juggling their personal and professional obligations.
- Create programs like fitness courses, wellness seminars, and mental health support services that encourage both mental and physical well-being.
- Establish open lines of communication on institutional dynamics and decision-making procedures to help faculty members feel less frustrated and insecure.
- Pay packages should be routinely evaluated and adjusted to ensure they are competitive and fairly represent academic accomplishments in order to address the problem of inadequate compensation.
- Establish training programs aimed at addressing gender inequality, preventing bias and discrimination among academics, and fostering an inclusive environment.

7. AUTHOR (S) CONTRIBUTION

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8. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author(s) declared that no potential conflict of interest concerning the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

9. PLAGIARISM POLICY

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