ADVANCING

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

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Full Length Research Paper

Literature Review of The University Teaching Trap of Academic Women

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Commonplace division of labor practices in Canadian academia favor a forty percent focus on each of teaching and research, with a twenty percent focus on service. The social climate, workplace culture, and social structure of academe often burdens women faculty with excessive teaching responsibilities. This may inhibit both their career success, and personal work-life balance. The absence of workplace policies, career and institutional support often encumbers women faculty and produces inequities in the workplace triggering what is defined as the "teaching trap". Smaller universities, financial cutbacks in the university system, and the general neglect of the needs of women academics serves to maintain both unfair, and unequal treatment of women scholars in the academy. The implications of these issues are discussed.

Keywords: Women faculty, university teaching trap, workplace culture, structural barriers, Canada

Introduction

Much has been written about female faculty in the academy, work-life balance, and challenges in the system of tenure and promotion. Increasingly, the student learning experience and teaching quality is the focus of advancing university curriculum and resources (Macfarlane & Hughes, 2009; Matthews, Andres & Adams, 2011), rather than ways to support faculty as they navigate large university classes and workloads with fewer resources. In a changing Canadian economic climate with less governmental funding allocated to higher education and the need to account for things such as the quality of teaching, university teaching remains a prominent part of female faculty's work and focus, and yet often it is given little to no weight, nor worth in consideration of tenure and promotion. A sad reminder of how far women faculty remain behind in academe is highlighted by West and Curtis (2006, p.4) that suggests "women face more obstacles as faculty in higher education than they do as managers and directors in corporate America".

How and why, do women faculty, trip into what I shall call "the teaching trap"? What implications does it have for their scholarly research, service, and personal life? What are the expectations of the university academic culture? How and why does the gendered culture of academe imposition and impinge upon women in their academic careers? This literature review explores how the prevalence of female faculty's work associated with teaching detracts from their overall workplace productivity and delimits their climb up the ladder of academic success. It explains how the culture of academe, and powerful socio-structural barriers, align to detract, and trap women faculty in teaching, with lessened time and focus for academic research.

Literature Review

Female Faculty in Higher Education

In Canada, similar to the United States, academic female faculty are vastly underrepresented in the halls of academe and are positioned lower on the wage and seniority scale relative to their male counterparts. While making some progress from the past women are still missing from the Canadian halls of academe especially visible minority women, and Aboriginal women (CAUT Education Review, 2010, p. 1). Their full-time incomes are only 88.8% of their male colleagues, and only approximately 20% of women hold Full Professor status (CAUT Education Review, 2010, p. 1). They are more likely to be found in the traditional disciplines such as education (49.9%), fine arts (42%), humanities (41.3%), and less likely to be found in mathematics and physical sciences (15.2%) (CAUT Education Review, 2010, p.2). In 2006, it was also found that Canadian women faculty are more likely to be unemployed (5.2% versus 3.4%) in comparison with male faculty (CAUT Education Review, 2010, p. 4).

With consideration of the variable of age, relative to establishment of one's career, in American academic institutions, which mimics Canada, most graduate students

receive their Ph.D. by age thirty-three (Clark & Hill, 2010, p. 1). Tenure then is often not secured until approximately age forty (Clark & Hill, 2010, p.1). If women academics desire to partner, and have a family these later years of life for raising and socializing children relative to one's biological time clock serves to further complicate the successful mix of career within one's profession. Austin (2006) concluded that the process of marriage and having children for female academics lessens one's chances for a tenure-track position. In Canada, Acker, Webber, and Smyth (2012) found senior management, and faculty association respondents were careful to sidestep issues of equity in claiming that women faculty had more difficulty achieving tenure, and securing equity in the university than males. They suggested that: "Typical tenure review systems may be creaking under challenges to forms of knowledge, ways of working and lifestyle priorities taken for granted when faculty were mostly white, able-bodied men, often married with a spouse at home to pick up the domestic and support work" (Acker, Webber, & Smyth, 2012, p. 757). Should women faculty have to weigh out, to have, or not to have children and a career? These important personal ingredients only add to the complex trajectory of professional women and their life's work in the academy.

The type and forms of ambiguity met by junior faculty in the university are unheralded. Price and Cotton (2006) found that many assistant professors did not receive guidelines, nor did they receive documents to give direction to any of the requirements of teaching, research, and service expectations in their disciplines. What seems to be more standardized in the academic system is the expectation that service is given less value overall, in comparison to the weight given to research and teaching. They also found that over half of junior faculty had never discussed their candidacy for promotion with the Chair of their department, and senior faculty felt these issues were part of informal collegial conversations. Hence, while senior faculty thought these conversations were taking place informally, the vast majority of junior faculty never had a single conversation about these important work components in order to climb the academic ladder of success towards tenure and promotion (Price & Cotton, 2006). Increasingly Ph.D. students note that they felt ill-prepared for their future work roles in the academy (Crooks & Castleden, 2012).

What is it about the culture of academe that contributes in leading women faculty astray in the academic process? How in an age of diversity, and accommodation, can women faculty not climb to the pinnacle of success, and how is it that these academic corridors of higher learning, and the ivory tower system are continually disadvantaging women faculty's careers in making their way through the workplace labyrinth?

The Culture of Academe

Salin (2003) and Tippeconnic Fox (2009) identified the culture of academe as one that supports both the isolation of workers and one which is based on an ambiguous work structure. Such work structures lend themselves to additional workplace stress and provide less structure for the individual worker to navigate their way. When workplace expectations for promotion and tenure are obsolete, the situation of female faculty becomes even more stressful and encumbered. Cormier (2007) found that even when women were successful business leaders and had broken the glass ceiling in their various high ranking workplaces, they did acknowledge feelings of isolation and a lack of "fitting in" (Cormier, 2007, p. 264). One said, "Even though I know I'm good, I feel like an imposter, so I prepare and I prepare again. That takes time - time that could be spent on better things"(Cormier, 2007, p. 265).

Despite all the abilities clearly highlighted by successful educated women, Simeone (1987) and Whaley and Krane (2012) found that throughout the decades women faculty were assigned heavier teaching loads, and additional service work in the university. Simeone (1987) identified that male faculty could be found to spend more of their time in mentoring their graduate students, or teaching graduate courses which were validated more highly. As an example, what were called "trailblazing women in sports psychology" they experienced the culture of academe as "institutionalized patriarchy and sexism" (Whaley & Krane, 2012, p. 70). While not all of female faculty detractors are men, some can be women as road blockers, gatekeepers, and queen bees in their lack of support and inequitable treatment of other women (Cummins, 2012). Despite such structural impediments within the academic culture, the successful eight trailblazing sport psychologists did reach full professor status, which took a total of fourteen attempts to reach the highest academic rank (Whaley & Krane, 2012).

Within such a precarious working landscape the toll is high for women academics. Minority women such as American Indian women faculty, reported "jealousy, competition, favoritism, and other forms of preferential treatment" as a part of their academic culture" (Tippecononic Fox, 2009, p. 214). The salient outcomes of this type of workplace lead to the absence of a personal life, physical health challenges, and sometimes the need to leave the workplace to find a better workplace fit. Nigerian women academic library, and information professionals coped by adjusting when they did their work, making personal sacrifices such as paying to enhance their digital skill abilities, and learning to work with others such as their male colleagues to bridge their skills gap (Anunobi, Ukwoma, & Ukachi, 2012). The importance of retaining faculty is another way of financial savings for universities as faculty replacements tend to increase costs (American Association of University Professors, 2008) Furthermore, Dielh (2014) found that female university leaders experienced tokenism, discrimination, a lack of mentors, harassment, and unequal salaries in their work lives. Despite these challenges many worked to overcome these adverse work conditions, and used it as a springboard for change to help improve their character and build their individual strength in the workplace and beyond.

Small Universities

In smaller universities, Mooney, Chrisler, Nutt Williams, Johnston-Robledo, and O'Dell (2007) noted how heavy teaching loads are commonplace work practices for faculty which deter from both their research time, and research collaborations. Often these types of institutions provide no additional marking aid, nor teaching assistants to help offset the heavy teaching workload, and make use of their limited faculty with the addition of the expectation of high service commitments. Both women of color (Benjamin, 1997), and American Indian women faculty (Tippeconic Fox, 2009) were called upon to undertake committee work that aligned with their diverse cultural backgrounds. One quarter of the women psychologists at a small university noted that they devoted at least thirty percent of their time to service related work (Mooney, Chrisler, Nutt Williams, Johnston-Robledo, & O'Dell, 2007). Given this, fifty-five percent of their sample suggested that they had little time for any productive scholarly research and writing (p.177). Eight percent said that they had absolutely no time for these same important work undertakings (p. 177). Single female faculty and single-parent female faculty may be further held back in academic success as they pursue additional course teaching, in order to supplement lower wages, and financial needs as self-supporting households that may include children. They are often required by the administration to undertake non-stop new course development in order to keep their small departments fresh, and current in their course offerings that include fewer faculty personnel and nonexistent staff support.

Smaller university settings are also less likely to offer, or validate regular sabbatical leaves for their faculty, and they may have limited, or no academic policies to support regular sabbatical intervals. With fewer faculty resources and personnel, women faculty may find they have no equal return on a sabbatical leave to pursue time for writing and research as required for promotion and exit out, or away from the teaching trajectory.

Faculty Discipline and Publication Record

Interestingly, when women were to be found in greater number in certain disciplines, in certain geographic locations, they were still limited in their research output. D'Amico, Vermigli, and Canetto (2011) found that in a discipline such as psychology, in Italy, with more women in the university ranks, women were more likely to be at the assistant professor level and not at higher administrative levels. They also were more limited in their publication output, were less likely to be a senior author, and were less likely to publish their research in internationally acclaimed journals relative to their male counterparts. Hence, order of authorship is very important to valuation of multi-authored research publications. West, Jacquet, King, Correll, and Berstrom (2013, p.5) provide reassurance that more women are named in JSTOR network authorships, and those numbers have increased by 12.1% overall, between the years 1965-1989

and 1990-2012. They note that fewer women are to be found as single authors on journal research publications (p.5).

Even the subject matter that women faculty teach and undertake their research in may be afforded less prestige in institutional evaluations. That is, Rothblum (1988) found that teaching and research on the subject of women's studies were not taken seriously, were not seen as academically valuable, and was overall devalued, and denigrated. Clearly, the lack of support for one's area of expertise has a large impact in the valuation process of a female academic's life's work and her contributions to teaching and research.

Research-Intensive Universities

Paradoxically, at research-intensive universities one would expect that faculty workload would favor the heaviest faculty time spent on research. Instead, as Crespo and Bertrand (2013) found in their Canadian survey research at a research university the faculty spent more time on teaching than research. That is, forty-four percent of faculty time was spent on teaching, thirty-five percent of their time was spent on research, fifteen percent on service, and another six percent on university administrative tasks (p.1).

Full Professors and Stem Disciplines

In order to reach the highest status pinnacle of full professor, Misra, Lundquist, Holmes, and Agiomavritis (2011) found women faculty instead hit a glass ceiling in the academic ivory tower of learning, as they attempted to move from associate professor status to full professor status. They found that women associate professors spent more time on their teaching, and male faculty spent their extra seven and a half hours of time on their research. Ambiguity becomes even more enhanced particularly for women in the STEM disciplines aiming to achieve the honor of full professor (Frank Fox, & Colatrella, 2006). With so few women faculty in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines, the need for their advancement becomes even more essential as women garner momentum upward through the academic ranks of success. Of social importance to the well-being of the health of residents and by failing to track and solve these significant career setbacks in the academic healthcare sector, the health care trajectory of Americans is put to the extreme test. Tong et al. (2014) found significant obstacles for early career academic cardiologists that were signaling their exit from the industry. Other health care professions such as academic dentistry in India report few women at the helm of academic leadership (Tandon, Kohli, & Bhalla, 2007) which is important for the purpose of future role models for female students.

Absence of Clear Policies

Within the culture of academe gender equity is further inhibited by the absence of clear policies for important career advancements including, starting salaries, documentation of requirements for promotion, the absence of faculty mentoring, and a lack of understanding of work life balance (American

Association of University Professors, 2008). Importantly work life balance must be understood as an "institutional problem" (Morrissey & Schmidt, 2008, p. 1400) that necessitates institutional understanding, and problem solving related to allowing academics to have down time, me-time, leisure, family time, and personal time. All of these policies would assist women faculty for more fair, and equitable work-related issues and enhancements if they want ways to counteract the teaching gap. For example, in Australia, at a prestigious research intensive university women faculty requested teaching relief time more frequently than men, in order to be more research productive (Probert, 2005).

Sociability and Networking for Gain

One unique way work life balance was handled in academic medicine was through the introduction of what was coined "the academic quilting bee"(Mayer, Files, Ko, & Blair, 2009). Quilting bees in history brought women together in a social setting to create a tapestry of fabric design with the end result of a completed quilt. Women joined in the quilt completion with other women to support each other, socialize, dialogue, and undertake enjoyment of the creative quilting experience together. Mayer, Files, Ko and Blair (2009) noted Friday evening academic quilting bees that supplied child care, thus allowing seven female academics to complete a six hour completed draft manuscript. In that time frame, socializing and dinner were also provided which resulted in motivation, enthusiasm, and support for fellow female faculty colleagues. In balancing the particulars of work, and life, a successful publication outcome was achieved in collaborative fashion for these medical academic women in a novel, fun, and productive way.

Women constantly struggle with finding time to work towards network enhancements, and time to nurture professional friendships. Isolation as women leaders is often subsumed by their work roles. Cormier (2007) suggests that similar to finding time to keep physically fit, women must remind themselves to fit in networking as part of their daily routine. Advancement links to strong relationships with others, and when women walk the time tight rope, they often need to drop social networks as there may be no available block of time in their agenda for it, let alone the energy required to undertake more. Welcoming new women faculty is another simple way to foster sociability, and engender collegial social networks (Slate & Harris, 2010). Until women are more numerous in number across the ranks of academe whereby they can establish an "old girls network" (Stufft & Coyne, 2009, p. 3) they will greet fewer opportunities to share their work experiences with other women in their midst, and grow their social networks to assist their life's work.

Additionally the concept of bringing colleagues together in communities of practice (Weaver, Pifer, & Colbeck, 2009; Jones, 2010) allows for more social interaction to build collegiality, as well as supplying chances to build collaborative engagements, and enduring social ties and enhanced

interpersonal communication. Tong et al. (2014, p. 2202) emphasize that "tangible factors such as onsite mentoring, institutional commitment, and the availability of collaborators directly contribute to the success of early career cardiologists". Slate and Harris (2010) found that female Texan community college faculty, were well served by senior faculty advising and mentoring them. "Mentoring can also aid the new faculty member in understanding unique challenges that affect women faculty, such as request for their service on committees, which rarely carry sufficient weight in their tenure and promotion process" (Slate & Harris, 2010, p.7). These inputs are essential to the success of female faculty and have numerous spinoffs for academic institutions of higher learning.

Structural Barriers

Within the academic hierarchy certain structural barriers work to impede the process of teaching and further add to the stressful workplace conditions of female faculty. Skelton (2009) reminds universities that they must be accountable with real quantifiable measures. Calling for improved faculty-student ratios, the general workplace structure is in need of improved workplace conditions, up to date contracts, downtime to catch ones breathe in the workday, and enhancements for professional development for faculty. The financial resources of various universities are currently being called into question. "Excellent systems therefore seek to lessen these inequalities rather than hide them through award schemes which emphasize individual performance" (Skelton, 2009, p. 110). Hence, the focus on collective improvements in universities is warranted, rather than more self-enhancing requirements to position already high achieving academics that are more likely to be Caucasian men.

Subsumed under, and intertwined within these structural barriers are the arguments focusing on faulty female faculty choices. The system blames the women faculty for their challenged careers, rather than the systemic biases and socio-structural barriers that are built into the academic system and hold women faculty down and out. That is, often differences in faculty outcomes are "the result of 'choices' women make (Curtis, 2011, p.6). Women often do not choose, but are either "pushed out" of the academic hierarchy, told what to do, or opt-out due to overwork, inequities with work-life balance, and partnerships that continue to require their over-functioning related to a partner's wellbeing, caregiving, childcare, and domestic responsibilities (Williams, 2010). Curtis (2011, p. 7) contends that women's choices are circumvented by "limited career options, socially gendered roles on the job and in the home, and by 'simple' economics". The very same actions by men and women in academic medicine in prioritizing family often, reaffirm old stereotypes, and stigmatize women and their actions in completely different ways. Strong et al. (2013) found that when men leave the workplace early for family reasons they are applauded by their peers, yet the same actions by women are perceived as the women are less interested in their

professional work on the job for the purpose of mommy tracking.

Family Policies

Women fear use of their institutions family-friendly policies as they think that there exists a user-penalty (Williams, 2014). This involves the intersection of mommy-penalties, delays in tenure for the baby track, and the mommy track (Cummins, 2005). Until "men use these policies, it's normalizing the idea that this is for academic parents, not just women" (Williams, 2014, p. 4). Women continue to be punished in the structural system of academe when they make use of family friendly policies instead of being assisted through, and by these processes to rectify fairness and the teaching gap.

Similarly, human resources often contextualized their concerns for employee wellbeing as people-friendly. Managers of academics, for example, in the UK university system were perceived as being "consultative, people-focused and facilitative" (Deem, 2003, p. 252). What was found to be most interesting was that the jargon was used to assume the academic system embraces more people-focused institutions that relied upon the language of business, but nonetheless stressful workplaces prevailed (Deem, 2003). Hence, what is codified as the concerns of employees, whereby male academic managers favored finances and research in the university, women favored the focus on students, learning and teaching. With declining economic resources, and a workplace "audit culture" (Deem, 2003, p. 255), or "quality audit" (Cheng, 2011, p. 180), the way forward may require serious reformulation of the academic structures of work.

Retention of Female Faculty

Perhaps one of the most significant challenges confronting women academics is their rates of retention in academe. Research on postgraduate women, and men in Australia found that the biggest hurdle for women was whether or not they would remain in academia upon completion of their doctoral studies (Crabb & Ekberg, 2014). Discrimination, and the boys' club mentality were constant roadblocks for women, and never were these same issues ever mentioned by the male academics. In a culture of fear female respondents were equally fearful to equate these issues with their own experiences, and were justifiably more likely to attribute these experiences to other women. Finding time in their life schedules to have and plan for family was typically attributed to women's experiences as faculty (Crabb & Ekberg, 2014). While so few women are to be found within the ranks of academe, it would be tragic to think that so much education had been successfully undertaken by women holding doctoral degrees, only to find out that they desired not to play the academic game in its totality as the rules and policies worked against them. Universities need to pay heed to the value of women academic faculty and place themselves as forerunners in policy formation to enhance, support, and encourage their faculty to continue, enjoy, and be successful in their life's work.

Cross-cultural Experiences

The future for women in less developed countries, such as in the Kurdistan region of Iraq; identified that the challenges of social, political, and historical devaluing of women, spilled over into female academics lives (Masika, Wisker, Dabbagh, Akreyi, Golmohamad, Bendixen, & Crawford, 2014). As such, women had to overcome foreboding traditional views where their lives were equated with domesticity, unequal competence, and total depreciation as academic women. That is, "for females in an environment where they cannot go out alone or be out late, it is very restricting to organize and participate in networks" (Masika et al., 2014, p.2). Under such restrictive social circumstances women academics would never hear about a conference, nor would they attend one for research purposes and general scholarly development (Masika et al, 2014). These capable women academics are at the pinnacle of old, outdated, punitive, and coercive denigration of their personhood that has far reaching deterrents and undermines their personal and professional lives. These findings are in keeping with other traditionally based societies, such as in India, where female academic dentists (63.5%) claimed they were unable to take care of family and groom themselves in their own professional prowess (Tandon, Kohli, & Bhalla, 2007). These social, cultural, and structural challenges require a whole new thinking in traditional rural India and other low-income countries, and are only just starting to change in urban settings such as India.

At the very minimal, developing countries such as Vietnam, still have no policies in place to promote women into leadership roles within the academy. Their closest current allies and support networks are women's associations located within the university that support women in the ranks of academia, celebratory days for women's achievements, and social outlets for women to travel and sightsee with each other for increased sociability (Huong Nguyen, 2013). The best way ahead in such a cultural climate as offered by Huong Nguyen (2013) is a woman's own self mobilizing effort, her familial support structures, and a university placement where she is allowed to vie for higher administrative ranks. Family continues to be the largest detractor that takes women away from the academic leadership avenue, and the women themselves have learned the script, to embrace what their university offers them, and to be happy with their less aspiring gendered identity (Huong Nguyen, 2013). In such delimiting climates of work, and its overlap with women's professional life, much more research is required in these low-income global countries whereby educated women experience patriarchal, cultural, and institutionalized biases in their personal and occupational social structure.

Conclusions: Escaping the Teaching Trap and Jumping the Hurdles

Why does the teaching trap need to be reset in order to value the important teaching work of academic women? First, the stress of continuing to place heavy workload burdens on the backs of women with high teaching loads, large class size, few

support systems, and networks, mommy tracks, and abysmal work life balance lifestyle, can only hamper the wellbeing and health of academic women. Sharma and Nair (2015) found women in management colleges in Jaipur noted regularly feeling stress, noting medical symptoms such as headaches and migraines, they experience anxiety on a regular basis, feel tired, angry and overall they are overwhelmed by frustration. All of these issues affect their health and wellbeing. Additionally, they will be less effective workers, at high risk of absenteeism, and less capable in their personal roles and responsibilities outside of the workplace. Their lessened capacity to work, and feelings of unhappiness adds higher costs to institutions and health care systems. Happy workers who are supported in the workplace add more positive energy to their employers and personal/institutional workplace productivity.

Productive, content, and happy female faculty is a sure magnet for the future success of undergraduate, and graduate female students. Happy and supported faculty will be better workers in the many roles they take on, such as academic teachers. Realistic, and refined female academic role models, and equitable teaching work structures, are required for future generations of incoming female students and faculty.

Mobilizing women into higher echelons of learning are not only good for the pipeline of learning but also for the advancement of women into leadership roles in all academic disciplines. Women's presence is required to make for even playing fields in academe, incorporating sound policies, within a diverse, and supportive workplace structure. Moreover, the local, provincial, and Canadian economy will be well served by educational advancement, and by the prowess of women faculty who are capable, and learned. In a highly mobile, and socially interactive global society, these strides are necessary to take women out of the trap of teaching, and into the corridors of success, promotion, research, administration, media exposure, and leadership, locally, regionally, provincially, nationally, and internationally.

Finally, the current corporate climate within universities, with financial cutbacks, fewer workers and faculty support systems, larger class structure, and higher teaching loads, would be well served with more equitable playing practices for both women and men faculty. Trapping women faculty through the academic culture, and structural barriers to be found in academe will serve to diminish the knowledge base and bright accomplishments, mobility, and success of women academics. It will provide no incentives to continue in one's life work with such destructive ways of working, diminishment of the human spirit, erosion of one's wellbeing, and will continue to push women faculty out of the corridors of teaching, learning, research, and service. Collectively, women faculty deserve, qualify, and need to be released from the inequity trap to be found in academe and linked to the incongruous teaching trap and its processes.

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