

Chapter 15

Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Work–Life Balance for Women Employees in the Academic Sector

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ABSTRACT

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become more popular in academia in the last few decades, and this has been shown to significantly improve the work-life balance (WLB) of women who work in the field. Women educators face excessive workloads, and the majority concur that burnout and poor personal health are serious problems. AI-powered virtual assistants can help women better balance their work and personal lives by managing their daily schedules and commitments. In the ensuing decades, the rapidly advancing field of AI is expected to fundamentally alter the nature of employment and labor. AI systems are raising important concerns about the nature of work, job security, and the delicate balance between our personal and professional lives as they become increasingly adept at automating various tasks, from routine manual labor to difficult cognitive work. Thus, the study aims to examine how AI affects women's work-life balance in the academic sector.

INTRODUCTION

A critical concern in today's workplace is WLB. Generally, the rigorous demands of sectors in AI might make it difficult to strike a healthy work-life balance (Shujia He, 2024). Women, who frequently have societal expectations and demands regarding their duties in the home and as caregivers, may find this problem especially intense. AI will create an opportunity for firms to set an example by establishing accommodating, encouraging work environments that allow women to achieve professional success

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without compromising their personal and family lives. More women in this field can be drawn to and kept in the profession by promoting work-life balance (Swamy et al., 2023). Automating time-consuming and repetitive jobs is one of the most important ways AI could change the workplace (Mahalakshmi and Jayanthiladevi, 2024). Employees can focus on more meaningful and intellectually interesting work, increasing job satisfaction and engagement, using AI-powered tools to handle routine tasks. Additionally, AI can improve workload management to avoid burnout and support a better work-life balance (Gomez-Herrera and Köszegi, 2022).

The era of AI in the workforce is revolutionary, characterized by increased productivity and socio-economic difficulties, especially gender equality. Women risk losing their jobs significantly since they typically hold automated positions due to AI. There are many long-term effects from employers and employees neglecting to address it, most of which are caused by a lack of interaction and demands not in line with reality for both sides. As a result, expectations for WLB must be set, and a practical explanation of them is required (Capelli et al., 2023).

The adoption of AI technology will impact women's employment opportunities and their position, status, and treatment in the workplace (Collett et al., 2022). Women in the labor force earn less than men, work more hours in unpaid child and elder care, have fewer senior positions, participate in fewer STEM sectors, and have more hazardous jobs. Governments, organizations, and businesses must use AI to minimize gender gaps rather than maintain or exacerbate them (Ramos et al., 2023). AI-powered applications may assist women in attaining a better WLB by optimizing calendars, automating home duties, and assisting with caregiving responsibilities. AI can support women's rights to equal opportunity for professional and personal development by lowering the burden of unpaid labor (Valls and Gibert, 2022). The potential for AI to assist women in advancing in the workplace does not end there. Many women have an imbalance of the responsibility for family life and domestic care, which can limit their capacity to pursue demanding employment. Of course, personal action is part of the solution: women can collaborate with men to balance the distribution of labor and the mental strain of household administration. However, AI may offer additional solutions to alleviate the pressure (Sabti et al., 2023).

Despite all, women have substantially improved the development and use of AI technology during the past 40 years, even though men now dominate the area. AI has the potential to increase productivity and save operating costs. Experts, however, think AI will transform the workforce rather than replace it. It could reshape job roles, rendering some duties obsolete while opening up new avenues for employment. It also enables remote and more flexible work arrangements as well. AI systems may enable more workers to work from home (WFH) or in distributed teams as they get better at managing jobs formerly limited to physical workspaces (Rallang et al., 2023). This would lessen the need for long commuting and improve the integration of work and personal obligations. Beyond just their technical proficiency, women have shaped AI's direction, morality, and social implications. The inclusive AI ecosystem gives women's voices greater prominence in harnessing the power of AI. The teachers can view the AI from three perspectives, as presented in Figure 1.

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