



# Challenges And Coping Strategies About Livelihood Of Female Staff In Tai Solarin University Of Education, Ijebu-Ode, South-West, Nigeria

*Ajede, Salamat Atinuke*

Department---: Sociological Studies/ Industrial and Labour Relations

University--: Tai Solarin University of Education, Nigeria

Email---: [oloriilodo@yahoo.com](mailto:oloriilodo@yahoo.com)

## ABSTRACT

Women integration into formal sector is constrained by several challenges which include limited access to credit, property, education, technical skill as well as coping with domestic responsibilities. Although some of the problems above are external to the organization where women work, they nonetheless negatively affect women integration and success within organizations and therefore constitute major challenges to their progression at work.

Against this background the study examined the challenges and coping strategies that career women have devised in trying to maintain the work/life balance. The general objective of the study was to examine the challenges faced by women while trying to balance their participation at work as well as their traditional responsibilities at home. Specifically, the study investigated the nature and types of challenges faced by women as they try to build viable careers. Women's perception of the work they do particularly in relation to their family responsibilities was determined. Also the different strategies that working women have devised to maintain their

livelihoods as well as work/life balance were discovered.

The study was anchored on the theoretical strength of the liberal feminist theory and glass-ceiling theory as they explain the challenges faced by women at work. One hundred and fifty questionnaires that were selected through the simple random and purposive sampling techniques were administered to female academic and administrative staff of the Tai Solarin University of Education in Nigeria to determine their views and perceptions on the challenges they contend with at work and the strategies that they have devised to cope with these challenges.

Results showed that while women self-identities primarily lie in their work, they are strongly influenced to perform the roles of home makers given our societal expectations. For many women the family remains the most important domain. In fact 66.7 percent of the respondents admitted that their homes were more important to them than their jobs. Appropriate recommendations were made to improve present situations.

Keywords: Challenges, Coping Strategies, Career Women, Marital Responsibilities, Wage labor.

## INTRODUCTION

The mass movement of women into paid employment as a result of both economic pressure as well as the need for self actualization has created additional challenges in the context of domestic responsibilities and family lives. People lives especially career women are getting busier all the time. Female employees are today juggling work and family responsibilities. The demand on their time for education, exercise, community service and/ or leisure can at times make them feel dissatisfied with the quality of their work and personal lives. Faced with the constant challenges to balance work responsibilities with personal commitments, women workers have over the years devised some strategies by which the work life balance can be conveniently and adequately achieved. It has however been observed that there is still a persistent report of high level of work/ life conflict for so many women ( Ibru, 2008) . This is because most career women still remain primary care givers responsible for their child care, elder care and health care. In addition to their primary responsibility for house hold management, they are still major contributors or at times primary family bread winners in their homes. Against the above background, the study investigates the challenges that plague working mothers/ wives as well as the rate at which the

strategies that they have devised to address the challenges have been successful.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Though the number of women in paid employment has increased considerably in Nigeria, many women are still constrained by several challenges as they try to build viable career and still maintain their primary responsibilities at home. The conflicts women have with juggling the responsibilities of full-time employment and family responsibilities has remained a great source of concern to most career women. This problem has led to the interruption of several women career due to the need to focus time and more attention to the care of their children and family. Since human resources utilization and development are the most important component in any nation's development, having fewer women in viable employment due to family and social pressure will no doubt continue to impact negatively on Nigeria's development goals. This is because most women's work such as domestic work, farm work and work in family enterprises are not included in the definition of economic activities that count. Hence women's economic opportunities are fewer than their male counterparts. The social pressure against women pursuing career still remain heavy. Women face more challenges in combining traditional roles with professional responsibilities. As (Okeke-Ihejirical, 2004) noted that marriage,

procreation and other extended family expectations have undermined women's career pursuits in Nigeria. Also (Burke and Mckeen, 2008) observed that most organizations have equated a woman's temporary break in employment with low commitment to career and this has been seen by other perspective as part of the factors that reduces the motivation and opportunities for women in employment (Dreher, 2003). In this scenario the adoption of adequate strategies that will ensure that women remain on their job becomes inevitable, not only as a means of improving the development potentials of Nigeria but also as a means of enhancing both the intellectual and professional knowledge of our women.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- (1) What are the main challenges faced by career women while trying to balance their participation at work alongside their traditional family responsibilities?
- (2) How do career women perceive the work they do outside their traditional responsibilities?
- (3) What are the main strategies that working women had devised to help them remain on their job as well as perform their family responsibilities?

- (4) Are there any forms of discrimination against career women as a result of their sex?

### **STUDY OBJECTIVES**

The general objective of the study is to examine the challenges faced by career women while trying to achieve the work- life balance;

Specifically the study determined the main strategies that career women had devised in order to remain on their job;

Investigated how women perceive the they do outside their traditional roles at home;

Explore the forms of discriminations against women at work.

### **LITERATURES CHALLENGES**

Although the issue of the need for women economic advancement is receiving more global attention than never before, most career women who are supposed to positively enhance their economic advancement through their activities as part of their Nation's labor pool are been challenged by several obstacles Lemmon, (2010). Byko, (2008) also observed that there has been several reported quantifiable roadblocks to success which serves as challenges to women in academic particularly in science and engineering. The challenges include lower salaries, fewer promotions and fewer leadership appointments. Apart from the clearly observed roadblocks, there are some other subtle difficulties; women

encounter in a male dominated fields such as the Universities. He argued further that some men tend to interrupt female colleagues more than they do each other in the university. The above interruption had been earlier illustrated as unintentional mindset Vallian (1998). She noted that the subtle differences in how women are perceived can affect their career progress both in business and in academia. Vallian much later in (2005) argued that her recent research findings have shown that the biases against women is a problem and challenge not because it is deliberate but because it is the outcome of assumptions of which we are not consciously aware. She noted further that these biases generally give men the benefit of doubt. Another significant challenge to women's career in the universities is the system which compels women to choose between family and career. This is because candidates are required to dedicate long hours to research, grant writing, publishing and teaching leaving little time for anything else. Family or children fitting into such a schedule is almost totally impossible, except if their spouses are willing to assume most of the family responsibilities; this is usually an unappealing option. Studies focusing on female faculty members have also found that women were more often in non-tenure track positions and were tenured they are promoted more slowly and are paid less than their male colleagues.

Other main issues of concern for women who report high level of work-life balance conflict includes lack of time, low energy level, stress, anxiety and guilt about not being able "to do it all". Other issue of concern highlighted includes lack of control over their work and work arrangements and a need for greater work and life satisfaction. Lemmon, (2010) also noted that women lack of adequate representation in developing nation's labor pool is due to the inherent conflict between women's traditional responsibilities and their work expectations. It was further argued that offering women educational opportunities alone while they cannot remain on their job or remain part of the labor pool as a result of the need to keep and maintain their traditional roles, will not provide complete economic turnaround for all developing nations. It has also been observed that women's economic opportunities are fewer than men's whereas the social pressures against women are particularly heavy in most middle -east countries and other developing countries including Nigeria. The social pressures against women remain a major challenge and obstacle to women's career pursuits and this may explain why women are still the poorest of the world poor representing 70percent of the 1.3 billion people who live in absolute poverty (Data and statistics, 2007). Store, (2008) observed that the tension between being a good mother and a good worker affect different social

class differently. He explained further that a minority of affluent women can participate more intensively in their children's lives or balance work and family with the assistance of domestic help, but this is not the case with the remaining vast majority of working women who can't purchase their way to balancing work, family and personal fulfillment. Stone, (1997) had earlier observed that since marriage and motherhood have been treated as moral obligations of women, if not sacred callings; the question of whether virtue consist in performing disciplined paid work is shaped by alter native moral vision of women as guardians of the family and hearth. Reconciling work and womanhood therefore remain a major challenge for career women not- withstanding the sheer overwhelming scale of their participation in the workforce.

### STRATEGIES

As a result of a growing awareness of the need for a work-life balance, many career women have devised several strategies by which the work-life balance can be achieved. Raza and Mehran (2009) observed that some career women have over the years adopted the flexible time options as a strategy that would enable them to maintain their home responsibilities as well as remain on their job. Apart from women developing strategies to keep them on track at their job while performing their traditional roles, many companies and co-operate organizations have also adopted programs,

policies and benefits as strategies to keep women on their job. Such strategies includes Tele-work (working from home or a remote office); Flexitime (changing the start and time of the work day); Job sharing (sharing a full-time position with another employee); Compressed work week (working full-time hours in fewer than five days); Part- time (reducing the number of hours of work each day or week); Employee Assistance Programs; Counseling Support on a range of Issues from financial to legal to personal and finally Child and Elder Care Services.

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

**Liberal feminism** equated gender equality with the equality of opportunity. Liberal feminist defines gender as a socially constructed system of stratification which produces a gendered division of labor. Ritzer (2008) observed that liberal feminist's main argument is the claim for gender equality and rest on four main principles thus:

All human being have certain features such as capabilities for reason, moral agency and self actualization. The exercise of these capabilities can be secured through legal recognition of universal rights. That the inequalities between men and women assigned by sex are social construction having no basis in nature and lastly that social change for equality can be produced by organized appeal to a reasonable public through the use of the state. They stressed further that

women oppression lies in women's lack of equal civil rights as well as educational opportunities. Women participate in the public sphere of education, work, politics and other public space but they suffer from discriminations, marginalization and harassment. Liberal feminist therefore holds that it is only when the above barriers and constraints are removed, that women will have the same chance for success as men. Kendall, (2007) noted that liberal feminists also stresses the importance of gender role socialization which they believe must changed particularly with regard to what children learn from their families, teachers and the media from the period when they are small. They also argued for the elimination of sex discriminations at the workplace. Giddens, (2004) noted that liberal feminist theorists explain gender inequalities along social and cultural attitude by drawing attention to many separate factors which contribute to the inequality between men and women. They are also concerned with sexism and discrimination against women at the workplace, educational institution and the media. They also tend to focus their energies on establishing and promoting equal opportunities for women through legislations and other means.

### **GLASS CEILING THEORY**

Glass ceiling is the new idea in feminism which seeks equal right for women in the workplace. It

is an idea in feminism which highlights the nature of transition in the feminist theory, targeted at meeting the challenges of a society in transition. It refers to situations where the advancement of a qualified person (usually a woman) within an organization is stopped at a lower level because of some form of discrimination. It is normally an unwritten and un-official policy which lies beneath the surface. Glass ceiling is an invisible barrier that has continued to exist as obstacle preventing minorities and women from acquiring top positions.

As more and more women enter the labor force/market, it became increasingly necessary for a variant of the feminist theory to emerge that will focus mainly on the challenges facing women in the workplace. It is therefore, a theory that focuses mainly on the nature of inequalities against women at the workplace that prevent them from rising to the top of their career as a result of their sex.

The term was first used by Feminists in America to refer to the invisible barriers that impede the career advancement of women in American workforce in an article by Carol Hymowitz and Timothy Schellhardt in 1986. Subsequently, other new wave feminists have used the term to challenge the mindset of the traditional patriarchal society habituated to discriminate women from basic right at workplace such as the denial of pay equity for same work and barrier to

progress. Recently, Hillary Clinton also used the term glass ceiling in her concession speech as she withdrew from the 2008 Democratic Primaries in U S. "And although we weren't able to shatter that highest, hardest glass ceiling this time, thanks to you all, it got about 18 million cracks in it". Schuler (2005) observed that the structure of oppression within an organization, such as the oppressive acts of patriarchy are all socially created entity, which are then embraced in language and interaction patterns that help to perpetuate gender ideologies which promote the glass-ceiling within organizations. She therefore holds that we can either choose to reproduce the oppressive structures through silence or our uncritical participation in existing discourses or we can boldly question, challenge, stretch and change the rules in organizations to favor women. Cole (2007) also defines glass ceiling as the analogy used to describe the subtly transparent barriers that prevents women from gaining access to the more senior roles in their organizations. He therefore advices that organizations should take up some actions that would provide a fairer framework of working conditions that is accepted to both sexes and make working condition enabling for both sexes instead of favoring one sex for the other. He advocated for an increased part time opportunities, permitting flexible working hours for women, job sharing opportunities, enhance training opportunities and

the introduction of career breaks for those who wish to take time out to focus on family responsibilities. Kendall (2007) also noted that glass ceiling of women can be seen in most organizations. She observed that in the industrialized countries, most jobs are segregated by gender, by race and by ethnicity. She stressed further that women are severely underrepresented at the top of U S Corporations, where only about 10percent of the executive jobs at fortune 500 Companies are held by women and out of the above, only 8 women are the CEO of such Companies.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### The study Setting

The study was conducted at the Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ijebu-ode, South-West, Nigeria. The University is the first premier University of Education in Nigeria and second to that of Ghana in Africa. Tasued is a transformation of the then Tai Solarin College of Education (TASCE) that was established in 1978. Presently the staff strength of the University is 1450 of which 43% are teaching staff in all the four Colleges in the School. The justification for the establishment of the University was to fill the gap of the absence of a university of education that would provide graduates with necessary teaching skills for effective teaching and learning at the primary and secondary schools as well as

the development of entrepreneurial and vocational skills that would equip them with the necessary abilities to work on their own and be able to provide jobs for others. Hence the University was conceived out of the need to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in the process of human Capital Development in a diverse and rapidly changing technological growing society.

#### **Study Population:**

The study population comprises both academic and non academic female staff of the Tai Solarin University of Education. Study population principally cuts across age, marital status, ethnicity, religious affiliation, discipline and language due to the heterogeneous nature of the study setting. Although 150 questionnaires were administered to female staff of the university, however 124 questionnaires were successfully retrieved. Hence the population for the study consisted of the 124 female staff that participated in the study.

#### **Sampling Technique:**

Simple, purposive and stratified random sampling techniques were employed to select a representative sample for the study. Female Staff were purposively randomly selected from all the Colleges and the administrative units of the University. The representative samples were then stratified first into academic and non academic staff they were then stratified into senior and junior staff of the University. The data collected

was rich and subjective. Qualitative primary data were from the targeted group through a structured questionnaire designed to derive the objectives of the study. The central question to this current study is to determine the challenges and coping strategies of female staff in the Tai Solarin University of Education. There has been significant interest in the challenges to women career and growing interest in strategies that are likely to combat these challenges particularly as it affect their career progression. O'Connor and Wright, (2013), Russell & Banks (2011) Cross & Linehan (2008).

#### **Research Instrument:**

The study adopted the qualitative technique for its data collection. Structured questionnaire were administered to the respondents to capture their collective views and opinions on the challenges and coping strategies of career women particularly within a university setting. The structured questionnaire which included open-ended and close –ended questions was administered to 150 respondents who are mainly females to generate data for the study objectives. However a total of 124 questionnaires were successfully retrieved.

#### **DISCUSSIONS**

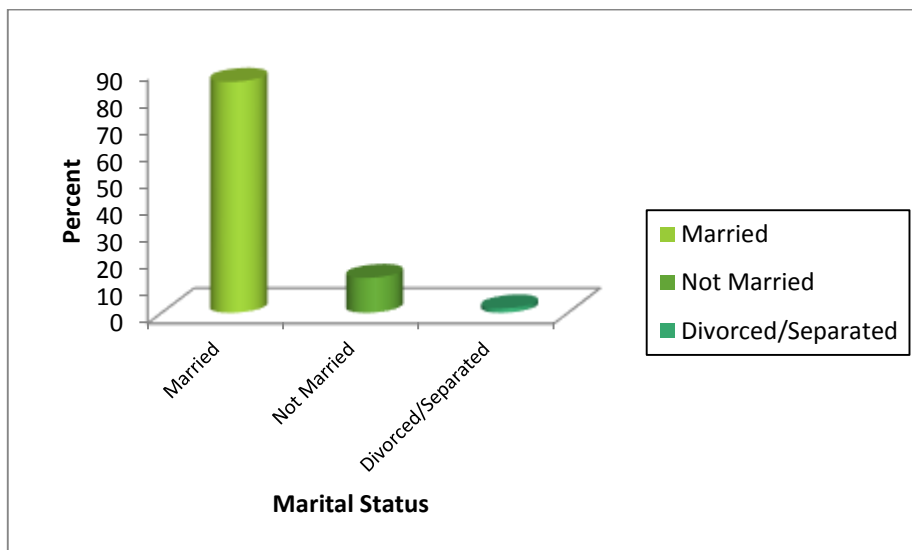
It was observed that the date of birth of the respondents ranged from 1953 to 1980. Hence the oldest respondent was 58 years old while the



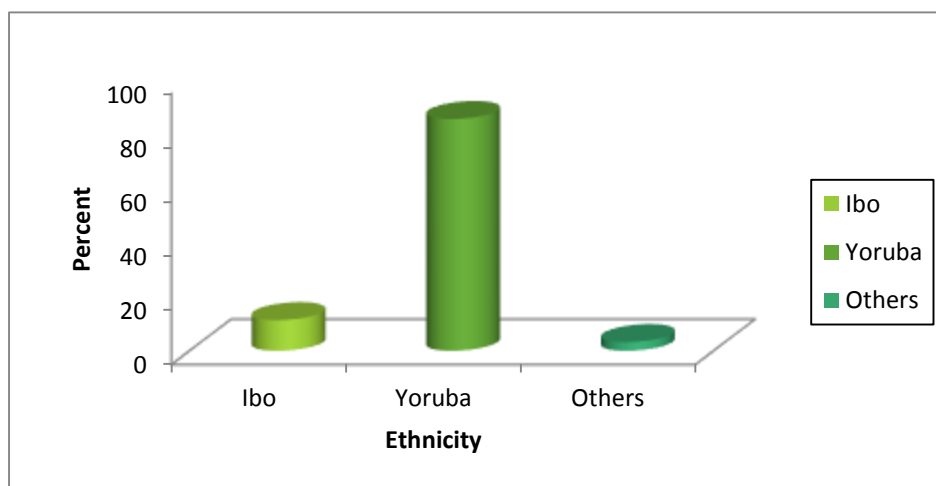
youngest groups of respondents were 31 years. It was also discovered that 85.50percent of the respondents are married while 12.90percent are

not married, only the remaining 1.6percent are either divorced or separated.

### Marital Status Among the Sampled Respondents



### Ethnic Composition Among the Sampled Respondents



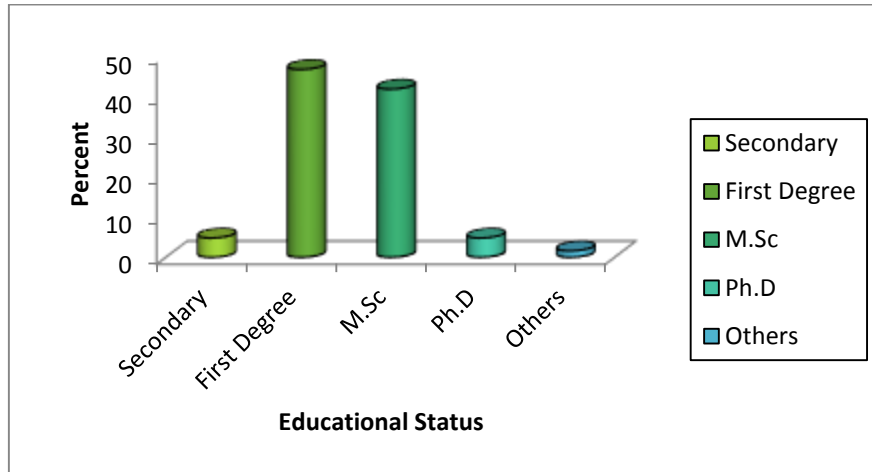
Results from the study showed that 85.50percent of the respondents are from the Yoruba speaking ethnic group, only 11.3percent of the respondents are Ibo while the remaining 3.2percent respondents did not indicate their ethnic group.

The fact that a very high percent of the respondents belong to the Yoruba speaking ethnic group does not come as a surprise, because the study location is Ijebu ode that is peopled by the Yoruba's in addition to the fact, that the University

is a state institution that is owned by the Ogun state government. With regard to the religious affiliations of the respondents, 79.0percent of the

respondents are Christians while the remaining 21.0percent of the respondents are muslims

### Educational Status Among the Sampled Respondents



Result also showed that only 4.8percent of the respondents had undergone only the secondary education while 46.8percent of the respondents had under gone the university and some other form of tertiary institutions, while 41.90percent of the respondents possessed master’s degree, only 1.60percent have some other kind of qualifications which was not disclosed. It was also discovered that only 4.80percent of the respondents are Ph.D holders. This findings has further confirm earlier literature that states that, fewer women are with higher degrees in the University that would afford them the opportunity to become senior lecturers in the university. It was also discovered that the respondents had served in the university between one to thirteen years. The results of the study also showed that 50.0percent of the respondents are

administrative staff of the university, while 8.0percent are messengers/clerks, only 33.90percent are academic staff. The result of the study also showed that only 33.90percent of the female population in the university were academic staff, even among fewer percent of respondents who are the academic staff, 20percent are graduate assistants, 25.0percent are assistant lecturers, 20.0percent are lecturer 1, 25.0percent are lecturer 11 while only 10.0percent are senior lecturers. These findings have also gone to further confirm earlier literature that fewer women are at the higher pinnacle of the academic ladder as lecturers. This is because 70percent of the respondents who are lecturers were in the junior cadre.

**IF ACADEMIC STAFF, WHAT IS YOUR PRESENT POSITION?**

|         |                       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | GA                    | 8         | 6.5     | 20.0          | 20.0                  |
|         | ASSISTANT<br>LECTURER | 10        | 8.1     | 25.0          | 45.0                  |
|         | LECTURER 1            | 8         | 6.5     | 20.0          | 65.0                  |
|         | LECTURER 11           | 10        | 8.1     | 25.0          | 90.0                  |
|         | SENIOR LECTURER       | 4         | 3.2     | 10.0          | 100.0                 |
|         | Total                 | 40        | 32.3    | 100.0         |                       |
| Missing | System                | 84        | 67.7    |               |                       |
|         | Total                 | 124       | 100.0   |               |                       |

With regard to the challenges that female employees had to contend with as a result of their job, 25percent of the respondents indicated that the major challenge they face is stress at work as result of combining marital responsibilities with their work. 11.30percent of the respondents noted that the biggest challenge they have to contend with is time management and time constraint, as a result of the dual roles while another 19.40percent disclosed that they do not face any major challenge as a result of their double responsibilities. Only 8.10percent of the respondents sees taking care of their children

before leaving for work as a major challenge for them. 14.5percent of the respondents also disclosed that tidying the house before leaving for work is a major challenge for them. A very high percent of the respondents specifically 83.90percent disclosed that they usually have to resume at school between 7.30am to 8am daily and for the above reasons 66.20percent of the respondents admitted that they usually have to rise up between 4.30am and 5am daily to be able to perform the necessary chores at home before leaving for work.

**WHAT ARE THE MAJOR CHALLENGES THAT YOU FACE IN TRYING  
TO MAINTAIN BOTH THE HOME AND YOUR PLACE OF WORK?**

|         |  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|--|-----------|---------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | TIME CONSTRAINT  | 14        | 11.3    | 14.6          | 14.6                  |
|         | TAKING CARE OF<br>MY CHILDREN<br>BEFORE GOING TO<br>WORK | 10        | 8.1     | 10.4          | 25.0                  |
|         | KEEPING THE HOME<br>TIDY                                 | 18        | 14.5    | 18.8          | 43.8                  |
|         | STRESS   | 24        | 19.4    | 25.0          | 68.8                  |
|         | FINANCIAL<br>CHALLENGES                                  | 2         | 1.6     | 2.1           | 70.8                  |
|         | HEALTH PROBLEMS  | 4         | 3.2     | 4.2           | 75.0                  |
|         | NO MAJOR<br>CHALLENGES                                   | 24        | 19.4    | 25.0          | 100.0                 |
|         | Total  | 96        | 77.4    | 100.0         |                       |
| Missing | System   | 28        | 22.6    |               |                       |
|         | Total  | 124       | 100.0   |               |                       |

With regard to the number of children of each respondents, it was discovered that 56. 40percent of the respondents have between two and three children while only 6.50percent have just one child to take care. In response to who take the children to school, 56. 50percent of the respondents disclosed that they have to take their children to school before going to work.

|       |     | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|-------|-----|-----------|---------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Valid | YES | 36        | 29.0    | 30.0          | 30.0                  |
|       | NO  | 84        | 67.7    | 70.0          | 100.0                 |

|                |     |       |       |  |
|----------------|-----|-------|-------|--|
| Total          | 120 | 96.8  | 100.0 |  |
| Missing System | 4   | 3.2   |       |  |
| Total          | 124 | 100.0 |       |  |

With regard to the existence of conflict between the two roles, 70.0percent of the respondents disclosed that there is no role conflict while 30.00percent admitted that there is indeed role conflict as a result of domestic responsibilities and official responsibilities. However, 25.80percent of the respondents disclosed that they are usually assisted by their friends and relatives while

24.20percent admitted that their husbands assisted them in reducing the burden of the dual roles, it was disclosed my 41.90percent of the respondents that they assisted most with domestic and household chores while 12.90percent confirmed that they are assisted with nursing and caring for their kids.

#### HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU PERCEIVE YOUR WORK?

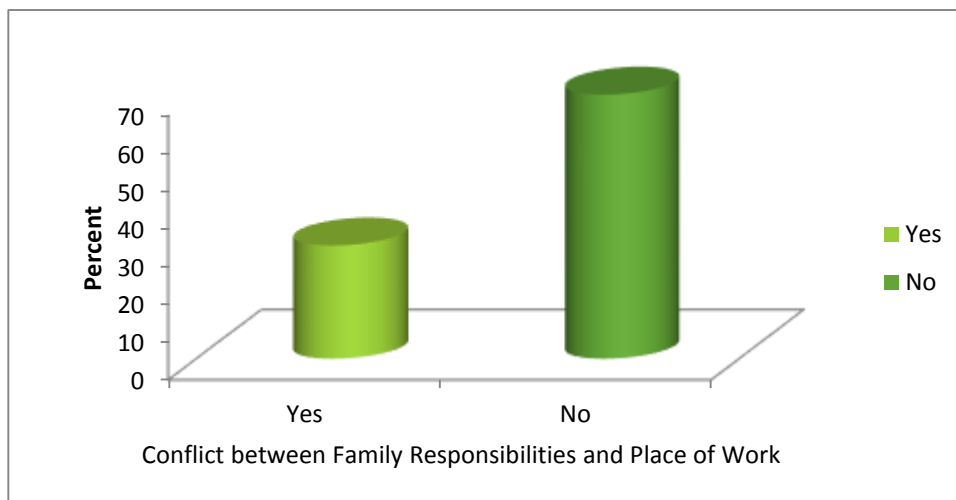
|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid VERY IMPORTANT | 110       | 88.7    | 88.7          | 88.7               |
| IMPORTANT            | 14        | 11.3    | 11.3          | 100.0              |
| Total                | 124       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

It was also discovered that career women take their work very important, this is because 88.77percent admitted that their work was very important to them, only11percent disclosed that it was important to them. Non- withstanding the disclosure that their work was very important to them, it was observed that more women attach more importance to their home than their job. Result showed that 66.7percent admitted their

homes was more important than their jobs, while 21 .10percent disclosed that their job was more important to them, it was only 12.30percent of the respondents that admitted that both roles are equally important to them. 88. 30percent of the respondents confirmed further that they had never been compelled to let go of one role for the other while 11.70percent admitted that they had one time

or the other been compelled to let go of one of the responsibilities for the other.

**Do you Have Problem Coping with Family Responsibilities**



**WHAT ARE THE MAJOR STRATEGIES YOU HAVE DEVISED TO MAINTAIN BOTH THE HOME AND YOUR JOB?**

|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid PRAYER                               | 6         | 4.8     | 7.5           | 7.5                |
| PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE                  | 6         | 4.8     | 7.5           | 15.0               |
| PROPER PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION           | 46        | 37.1    | 57.5          | 72.5               |
| USE OF MODERN APPLIANCE                    | 2         | 1.6     | 2.5           | 75.0               |
| HARD WORKING,DEDICATION,LOVE AND SINCERITY | 10        | 8.1     | 12.5          | 87.5               |



|                |     |       |       |       |
|----------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|
| TIME           | 10  | 8.1   | 12.5  | 100.0 |
| MANAGEMENT     |     |       |       |       |
| Total          | 80  | 64.5  | 100.0 |       |
| Missing System | 44  | 35.5  |       |       |
| Total          | 124 | 100.0 |       |       |

Proper planning and adequate organization scored highest with regard to the strategies adopted by career women to withstand the challenges of their dual responsibilities as 57.50 percent admitted to this strategy working for them, while 12.50 percent attested to proper time management. In response to the question on discrimination at work, 80.30 percent disclosed that they had never faced any form of discrimination at work while 19.40 percent disclosed that they had faced one form of discrimination or the other at work. With regard to discrimination at home as a result of their job, 91.70 percent admitted that they had never been discriminated against at home due to their work, 8.30 percent disclosed that they had faced one kind of discrimination or the other at home as a result of their job as career women. 77.60 percent of the respondents also preferred to work full time while only 22.40 percent preferred to work as casual staff, if it were possible. 78.70 percent of the respondents also attested to the fact that getting to work had never posed a problem while the remaining 21.30 percent of the respondents attested to the fact that getting to work had sometime posed a problem for them.

The pressure from the dual responsibilities of combining work with domestic duties have been seen to constitute a threat to the health and wellbeing of 21.30 percent of the respondents while the remaining 78.70 percent of the respondents disagreed to the above view. With regard to the willingness and readiness of the respondents to be transferred from their present location to another, most of the respondents, specifically 82.60 percent disclosed that they are not willing and ready to be transferred while only 17.60 percent are ready to be transferred from their location. 88.10 percent of the respondents disclosed that they are not ready to be transferred from their present location, even if it attracts a better prospect and this is because they are not ready to leave their family behind.

### CONCLUSION

The study examined the challenges and coping strategies of family friendly career women at the Tai Solarin University of Education in Ijebu-ode. Results showed that Work and family remain the two most important domains in a person's life, however for most women the family remains the

most important domain. In conclusion, the themes that emerged from the qualitative analysis highlighted the pervasive factors that impact the worker family balance. While women self-identities primarily lie in their work, they are strongly influenced to perform the roles of homemaker and dependent care provider given the societal expectations; this does require negotiation both at home and at work in terms of how and when work can be done. Furthermore, women who would had taken a casual work option, mentioned that this would have been a better choice as they felt their families needed them more.

With an increasing number of women entering the workforce and the Nigerian Universities facing a talent shortage, it appears that understanding the role of work and family in the lives of women professionals will become an important HR concern.

It was also discovered that career women have come to take their career and job seriously, as more and more women joined the labour force and this has tend to reduce the problem of role conflict as result from the study indicated that very few respondents attested to having role conflict between the two domains. The problem of discrimination against women have also tend to drastically reduced as result also showed, however this findings might be as a result of the fact that the study was conducted in a university setting

where sexual stereotypes is not likely to be prevalent.

Nigerian women University professionals can achieve the work family balance by setting priorities in their work and personal lives through proper planning and proper organizational capabilities and by having support systems both at work, formally through HR policies and programmes, and informally through supervisor and co-worker support and at home, as results have shown. The data raised issues that need to be addressed, such as the problem of stress and time management constrain as major challenges that family friendly women still has to contend with. The data also raised the issue of the concentration of women in the lower-rank of both the administrative and academic cadre in the university. The identified dimensions could serve as a platform for further research on women University professionals and the work/life balance which will serve as a guide for organizations to address the work/family balance issues of working women

. When all the above raised issues are properly, this will in turn go a long way in enabling women to perform better at work, be more committed to the organizations they work for, and ultimately contribute to the growth of the economy and positively impact the society as a whole.

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