

Ties with Benefits:

Relationship between Multiplex Ties, Gender and Work-Life Balance in Higher Education

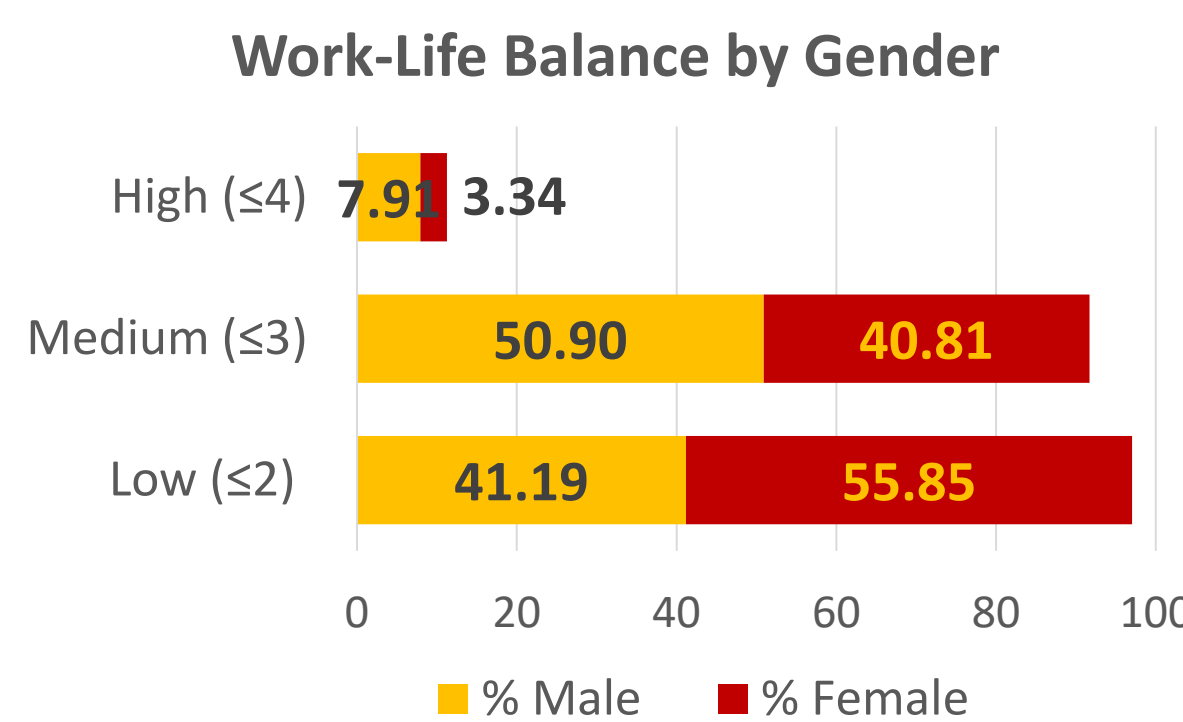
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Research Questions

- 1) Do multiplex ties improve Work-Life Balance?
- 2) Does the relationship between multiplex ties and Work-Life Balance differ by gender?

Background

Failure to keep Work-Life Balance arises when individuals face demands from one role that is incompatible with demands coming from another role (Elliott, 2008; Kahn et al., 1964). Imbalance in the work-life domain affects family tensions, psychological well-being, turnover, absenteeism and productivity (Davies & McAlpine, 1998; Glass & Estes, 1997; Hughes et al., 1992; Kinman & Jones, 2008). Because division of work and private life is vague in higher education, faculty often fail to find balancing point. Although faculty have total control of work management, longer work hours and heavier workload challenge faculty's personal lives and their family responsibilities.



Female faculty are more likely to experience stress coming from work and family as they are traditionally expected to participate in both family and work roles at the same time (Holt & Lewis, 2011; Misra et al., 2012, O'Laughlin et al., 2005).

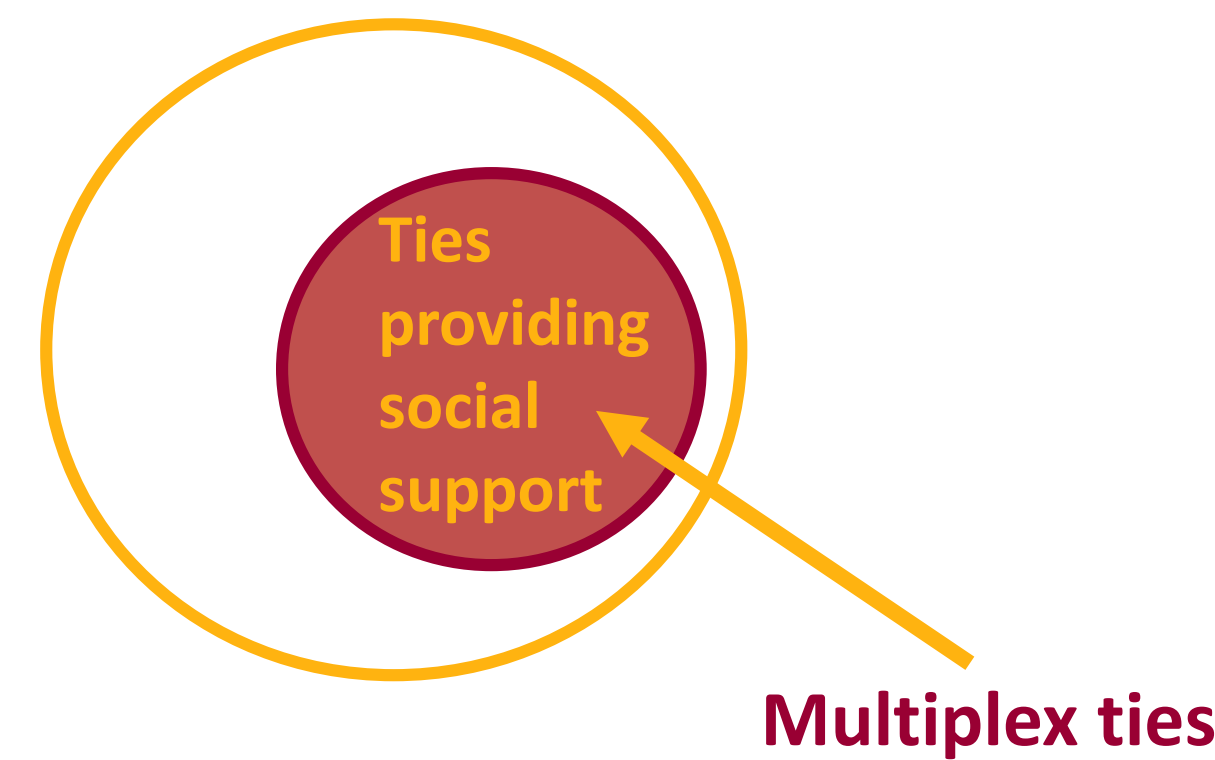
Social network can help faculty to cope with Work-Life Balance as faculty often have diverse types of social exchanges with one relationship in their networks. Multiplex ties indicate when individuals share various functions of interactions within a single relationship (Ferriani et al., 2012; Ibarra, 1995; Kapferer, 1969). Multiplex ties enable individuals to leverage on the resources of one relationship on another as they connect different exchanges with trusted people (Coleman, 1988; Greve & Salaff, 2005; Methot, 2010).

Data & Method

We use an NSF-funded national survey of U.S. faculty in STEM field in 2011 with a 40.4% response rate collected by Center for Science, Technology and Environmental Policy Studies (CSTEPS). The final sample size includes 4,196 valid responses. We use **OLS regression analysis with interaction term** to examine the effects of network characteristic and gender on Work-Life Balance. For the analysis, we include faculty in all institutional types in higher education (e.g. Research Intensive, Research Extensive, Master's colleges, etc.).

Hypotheses

In Professional Network...

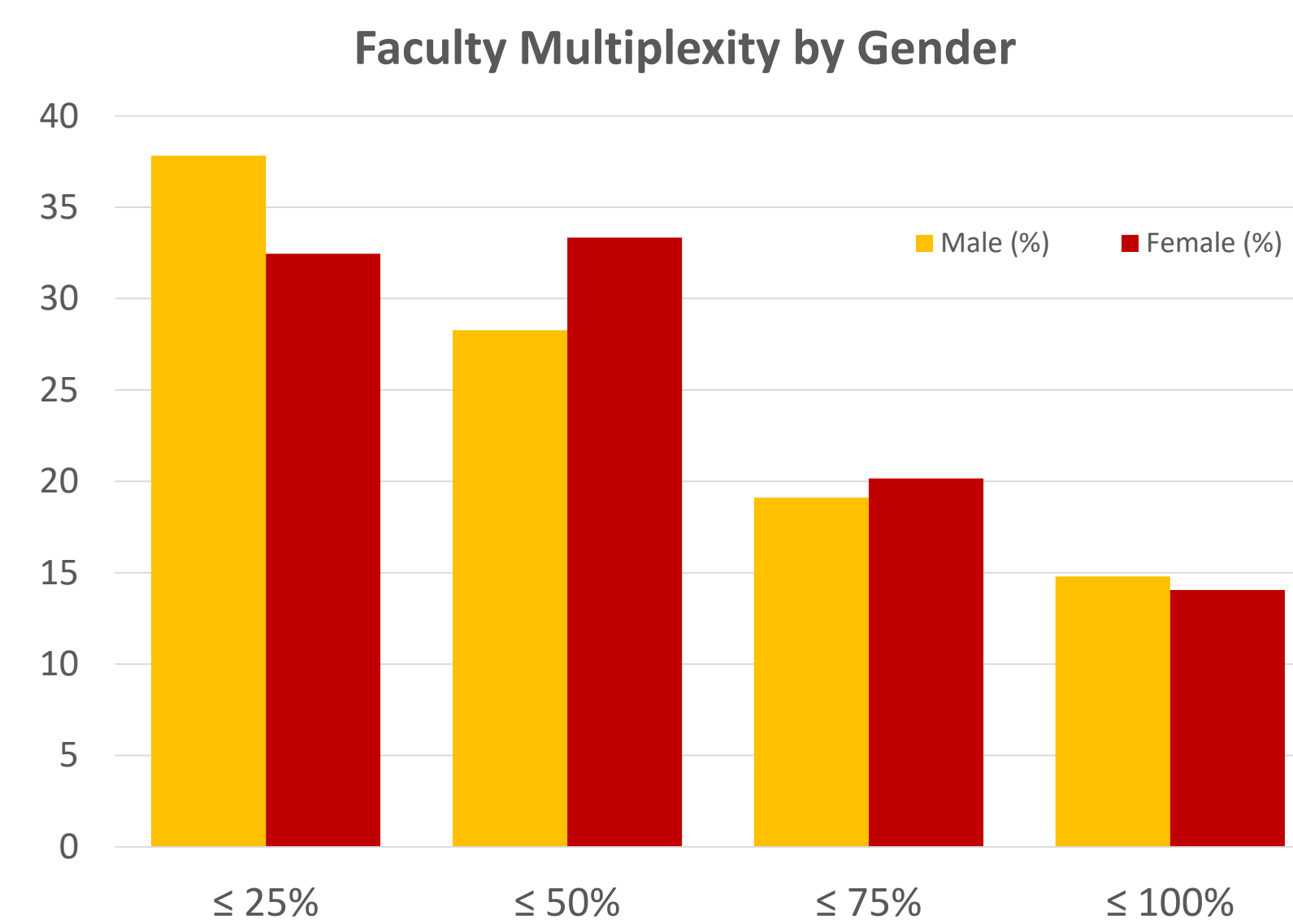


Hypothesis 1: Faculty with more multiplex ties will have better Work-Life Balance than those with less multiplex ties

Hypothesis 2: Female faculty will have worse Work-Life Balance than male faculty

Hypothesis 3: Gender moderates the relationship between multiplex ties and Work-Life Balance

Findings

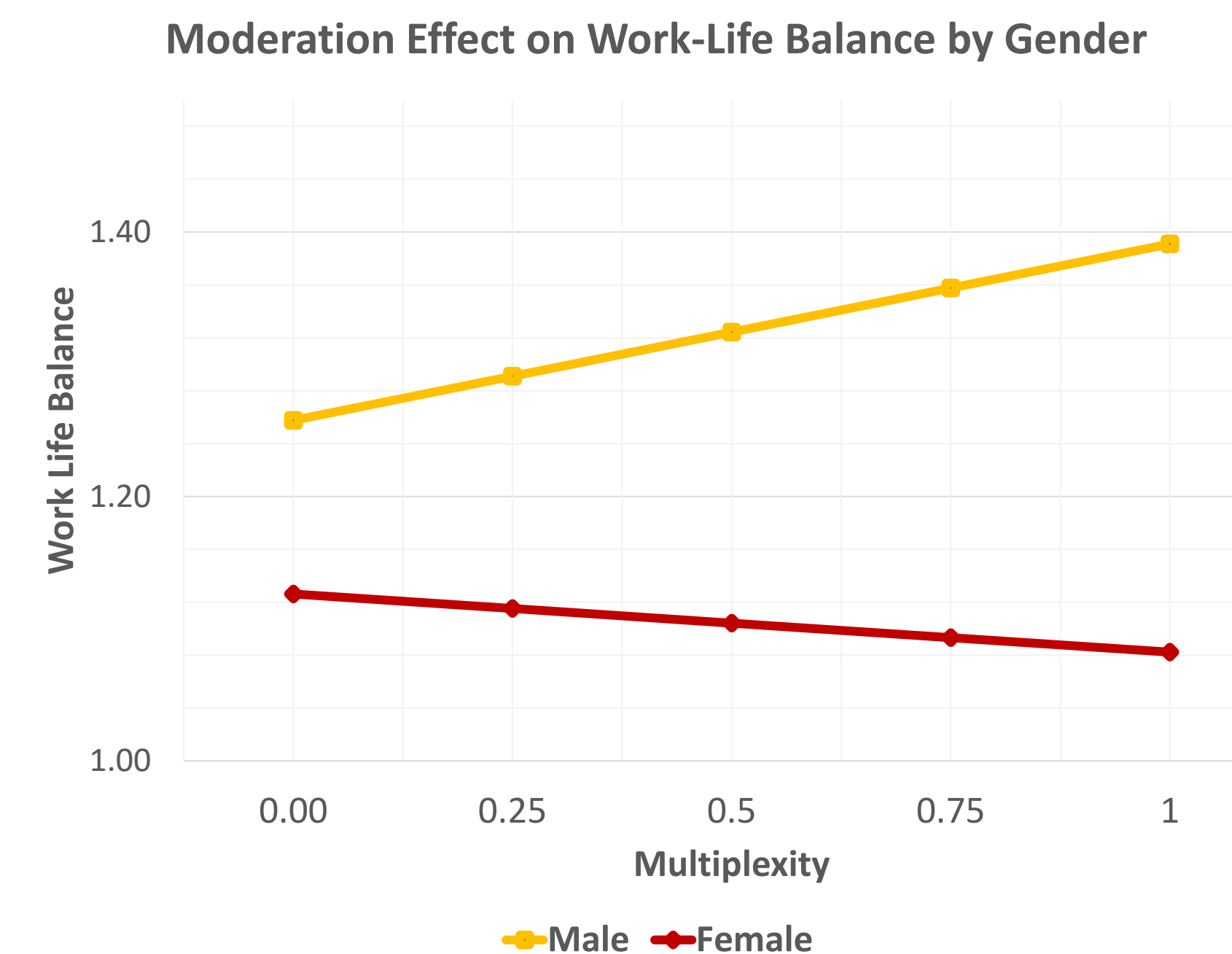


In our sample, the composition of professional network does not vary a lot by gender. However, our regression analysis shows that the impact of multiplex ties on Work-Life Balance differs by gender.

Overall, having more multiplex ties (i.e. ties which can provide social support and professional support at the same time) improves Work-Life Balance for faculty in STEM field. Female faculty are more susceptible to Work-Life Balance.

Our findings from the moderation model show that multiplex ties in professional network have different impacts on Work-Life Balance by gender:

- Multiplex ties **increase** male faculty's Work-Life Balance
- Multiplex ties **decrease** female faculty's Work-Life Balance
- The results demonstrate that promotion requirement, family care and work satisfaction also affect faculty's Work-Life Balance



Policy Implications

Our findings provide several insights on how to enhance faculty's Work-Life Balance:

- Our findings suggest that academic institutions interested in the improvement of faculty's psychological well-being and ultimately in their retention should consider the importance of social relationships among faculty. The findings reemphasize the importance of fostering collegial culture in which faculty can benefit from multiple resources embedded in their social relationships.
- Academic institutions interested in fostering female faculty's psychological well-being should be aware that female faculty are more susceptible towards the tensions between family (or private life) and work compared to their male counterparts.
- Yet academic institutions interested in formulating or promoting policies related to Work-Life Balance should be cautious as there is gender difference in utilizing network to cope with demands from taking multiple roles.

Names of Variables

Dependent Variable: Work-Life Balance (Index)
Independent Variables: Multiplexity (% of multiplex ties in the respondent's professional network), Gender (1=female)
Control Variables: Individual characteristics, Work characteristics, Organizational characteristics

Full Regression Results

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Multiplexity | 0.0709* (0.0400) | 0.0609 (0.0447) | 0.1334** (0.0568) |
| Gender | -0.2502*** (0.0246) | -0.2054*** (0.0293) | -0.1314*** (0.0487) |
| Multiplexity # Gender | | | -0.1775** (0.0903) |
| Age | | 0.0115*** (0.0018) | 0.0115*** (0.0018) |
| Citizenship | | 0.0170 (0.0414) | 0.0174 (0.0415) |
| Married | | -0.0682* (0.0406) | -0.0697* (0.0406) |
| Race | | -0.0265*** (0.0089) | -0.0266*** (0.0089) |
| Rank | | 0.0100 (0.0234) | 0.0100 (0.0234) |
| Service Position | | -0.0454*** (0.0133) | -0.0458*** (0.0133) |
| Center Affiliation | | -0.0465 (0.0309) | -0.0472 (0.0309) |
| # of Publication | | 0.0072* (0.0040) | 0.0072* (0.0040) |
| Teach Load | | -0.0158** (0.0069) | -0.0161** (0.0069) |
| Promotion Requirement | | -0.0642*** (0.0207) | -0.0654*** (0.0206) |
| Work from Home | | -0.0064 (0.0067) | -0.0064 (0.0066) |
| Family Care | | -0.0975*** (0.0358) | -0.0976*** (0.0358) |
| Work Satisfaction | | 0.3171*** (0.0375) | 0.3197*** (0.0373) |
| Work Environment | | -0.0388 (0.0286) | -0.0390 (0.0285) |
| Work Equity | | 0.0360 (0.0236) | 0.0353 (0.0237) |
| Department Type | | 0.0719*** (0.0128) | 0.0712*** (0.0128) |
| Institution Type | | 0.0023 (0.0068) | 0.0025 (0.0068) |
| Constant | 2.3178*** (0.0232) | 1.0261*** (0.1576) | 0.9962*** (0.1577) |
| Observations | 3,191 | 2,294 | 2,294 |
| Adjusted R-squared | 0.032 | 0.143 | 0.144 |

Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01