

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES FACED BY WORKING WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Since the dawn of time, women community had indeed been viewed as second-class citizens. In a male dominated society, hierarchical norms have mandated the dos and don'ts for women in every aspect of their life, from public behaviour to reproductive decisions. Working women, that is, those who work for a living, encounter challenges at work just because they are female. The public perception of women's roles lags far behind the law. Gender discrimination is another issue that many women face at work. Though business workplaces are gradually closing the gender divide, private institutions and government offices remain even further behind. Women in general find it difficult to distinguish between their personal lives and their successful jobs. For generations, women have been victims of men's power struggles. When communicating with co-workers, colleagues, and bosses, women in higher positions face the problem of ego clashes. This descriptive study on Problems and challenges faced by working women was conducted among the women working in Trichy based printing press. 50 respondents were selected by using simple random sampling with lottery method. A self- prepared questionnaire was used to collect data covering socio-demographic variables, work place safety, problems encountered and their work life balance. The major findings of the study will be discussed in the full paper.

KEYWORDS: *working women, problems, challenges, managing work and life.*

INTRODUCTION

Since the dawn of time, women community had indeed been viewed as second-class citizens. In a men society, hierarchical norms have mandated the dos and don'ts for women in every aspect of their life, from public behaviour to reproductive decisions. The public sphere has historically been viewed as a male-dominated arena with a small number of female participants. Women putting themselves out there to test the workplace's dangerous waters. This, however, is increasingly changing, as evidenced by the fact that since the Over the last few decades, an increasing number of women have entered the job, tearing down formerly insurmountable obstacles. They are prevented from working in certain, if not all, sectors. Men and women have never had equality in the workplace. Despite having

similar credentials, women workers face discrimination. the majority of occupations. Mental Health America is a non-profit organisation dedicated to improving mental health in the United States (2019) women in workforce are frequently confronted with several challenges. That has a negative impact on their professional and social needs. One that sticks out is the growing problem of occupational harassment. It creates a great deal of distress and suffering for those who are affected by it. Those who become physically and psychologically ill as a result of it.

Working women, that is, those who work for a living, encounter challenges at work just because they are female. The public perception of women's roles lags far behind the law. Those who hire employees are prejudiced because of the notion that women are only suitable for specific positions. As a result, women can readily find work as nurses, doctors, teachers, administrators, or assembly line workers. Even when there are professionally qualified women available, a male candidate with similar credentials is prioritised. Gender disparity poses a barrier during the recruitment process. Even while the law declares equality in remuneration, it is not always followed. The ingrained belief that women are incapable of performing difficult tasks and are less talented than males. Due to the social system, which is still more dominant, Wentling (2003) in her study of working women in Delhi. found that women's dual roles produce friction and disagreement. She found that conventional patriarchal set up of Hindu social order remains essentially the same and thus women encounter problems of role ambiguity.

Women face wide variety of challenges in their workplace, they are; Both men and women are two sides of the same coin at all times. Each of them has their own personality, and each of them approaches the matter in a unique manner. Gender discrimination is another issue that many women face at work. Though business workplaces are gradually closing the gender divide, private institutions and government offices remain even further behind. Men also are deemed more suitable than women in jobs that demand frequent travel, physical activity, and so forth. Because they cannot handle maternity vacations and other bonuses, many employers ask women workers freely about their marital and future family planning when recruiting them.

The kind of sexual abuse that women are subjected to in the workplace is one of the most embarrassing and heart-breaking difficulties they confront. Cunning males' prey on women, luring them under the guise of love and sexually harassing them. Many men believe that working women are inherently compromised, which is the foundation for such heinous acts. Women in general find it difficult to distinguish between their personal lives and their successful jobs. They have a tendency to conflate professional duties with personal priorities, which is where the problem begins. As she has failed to make a distinction between job and life, her friends and relatives feel ignored, and she has to

confront the anger of her whole support system. This is primarily an identity issue, and the lady must help herself to get out of it. Because establishing balance between work and life is crucial in one's life.

For generations, women have been victims of men's power struggles. Women are ready for a tough fight as the millennium approaches. Many female executives have stated emphatically that it took them a long time and a great deal of guts to overcome political games and advance to their current positions in their organisations. While at work, men are constantly attempting to demonstrate their supremacy. When an alpha male is forced to disclose to a female management, his ego is crushed. Regardless of how nice the lady is to him, he will try to find flaws in her approach or work style, etc. When communicating with co-workers, colleagues, and bosses, women in higher positions face this problem.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Aim of the study

To study the problems and challenges faced by working women.

Research Design

The researcher adopted the descriptive research design concerned with describing the various characteristics of the study population pertaining to their socio-economic condition, problems and challenges in their work environment.

Universe

The universe of this study constituted of women working in Trichy based printing press. There were 72 women working there who are the universe of this study.

Sampling technique:

Since the universe is finite in nature, the researcher has adopted the random sampling technique to select the respondents from the universe by using lottery method. 50 respondents were selected as sample.

Sample size:

Random sampling was employed to collect the data, the sample size was 50. No inclusive or exclusive criteria were used to select the respondents.

Tools for data collection:

A self- prepared questionnaire was used to collect data covering socio-demographic variables, work place safety, problems encountered and their work life balance. It covered the details like age, religion, marital status, education, socio-economic background, income, housing type, family type and their challenges and problems in their work and personal life.

Pilot study:

Before starting data collection, the researcher analysed the feasibility of conducting research and to know the availability of the women workers, the researcher conducted a pilot study to have some preliminary information on the selected universe. The topic chosen was discussed with the press authorities and women workers and got permission to conduct research over there. From this the researcher could get some idea about the universe which in turn helped to prepare the data collection process.

Pre-test:

Pre-test is defined as a study, which is done in the initial stage of the project in order to find the reliability of the interview schedule based on the respondent's response. The tool of this study is administered with 5 women workers in the selected press to know its suitability. After pre-test, there was no change taken place in the tool. Hence the pre-tested respondents were included in the sample.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:

Personal details

Half of the respondents belonged to the age group 31-40 years and (28%) of the respondents belonged to the age group 21-30 and the remaining respondents are belonged to the age 41-50 and above 50. More than 3/5 the of the respondents are graduates. Majority (86%) of the respondents are married and the remaining are unmarried. Majority (82%) of the respondents are having 1-5 members in their family. 38% of the respondents have 2 children and 22% of the respondents have 3 children and 16% of the respondents have one child. Majority (82%) of the respondents are from nuclear family and the remaining are from joint family. more than 1/2 of the respondents (56%) earn Rs. 10000- 20000. Very few respondents earn above RS.40000. 3/5th respondents have own house and the remaining 2/5th of the respondents have rented house. More than 1/2 of the respondents (54%) hailing from tiled house and the remaining home concrete house.

Problems and challenges at workplace

2/3 of the respondents (66%) have 1-5 years of experience and the remaining respondents have more than 5 years of experience. majority (84%) of the respondents were of the opinion that their workplace is safe. Majority (84%) of the respondents were of the opinion that their workplace is safe. More than 3/4th of the respondents experienced stress due to heavy workload and 22% of the respondents did not feel the same. Majority (80%) of the respondents have personal problems and the remaining respondents did not have significant personal problems. Nearly 3/5th of the respondents have mental health issues and the meagre respondents have physical health problems. Nearly 3/4th of the respondents felt that they have their colleague's support and the remaining did not feel that they could get help and support from their co-workers.

3/5 the of the respondents were of the opinion that problems to women at workplace is different from men. More than 1/2 of the respondents opined that those problems are common to both the gender at workplace and the remaining were of the opinion that problems are more among female gender in comparison to male. Nearly 3/4th of the respondents were of the opinion that problems at workplace affects the work efficiency of the respondents. Nearly 3/4th of the respondents receives family support during problem situation. Remains respondents do not have such support during problems encountered by them.

Majority (80%) of the respondents expressed that they came to job due to family compulsion and the remaining work on their will and wish. A vast (94%) majority of the respondents find difficult to spend quality time with their family members because of the work burden. 2/5th of the respondents satisfied with their salary and 3/5th of the respondents expect more salary in comparison to what they get now. More than 1/2 of the respondents are the single earning members in their family and the remaining are having more than one earning member in their family. Nearly 3/4th (70%) of the respondents found difficulty in reached their workplace. Majority (80%) of the respondents use two-wheeler and bus to reach their work station and the remaining respondents go for job by walk. A vast majority of the respondents are not satisfied with their present economic status. Only 10% of the respondents satisfied with their economic status. 12% of the respondents experienced sexual harassment at their workplace and majority of women did not have the same. More than half (58%) of the respondents experienced problems caused by their higher authorities. 2/3rd of the respondents (66%) felt that the noise created by the machines affect their hearing ability. 3/5th of the respondents experienced skin irritation and rashes due to continuous use of the ink for a long time. more than 3/5th of the respondents satisfied with the existing laws on problem at workplace. A vast majority of the

respondents opined that the management is taking actions against the workplace problems and their prevention.

CONCLUSION

Working women face lots of problems in their workplace and their personal life. The support from the family members and the cooperation of the co-workers of all categories including the superiors and subordinates is significant to make the work possibly successful. Working women also have the conviction to uphold the dual responsibilities in a balanced way. Getting confused with personal and work life make women more vulnerable to problem situations. Work life balance and managing problematic situations in a matured way make women unique and successful in both the spheres of life.

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