

CHALLENGES FACED BY WORKING WOMEN: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Indian women nowadays excel in all fields, including space exploration and rocket science. Working women play a vital role in the economic development of the country and their contribution is nothing short of their male counterparts. They play a vital role in the various fields. However, they face various challenges such as mental harassment, gender harassment, discrimination at workplace, insufficient maternity leaves, lack of safety at work place, improper working conditions, job insecurity and powerlessness. The recent trend in the list is harassment through mobile phones and social media. Overcoming these challenges is vital for a better society. This conceptual paper reviews the challenges faced by working women in Tamil Nadu and offers a few suggestions to overcome the challenges thus joins hands in paving way for a better tomorrow.

Key words: Working women, challenges, work place,

1. INTRODUCTION

To make our country as a developed economy women's participation is also essential part. Now women are working in almost all the fields in India. But they are not treated equally in their workplace and are considered as inferior to their male co-workers. In some cases they do not get the same benefits as that of a male employee. The major issues and problems that women are facing in their work place includes unequal pay, insecurity, sexual harassment, lack of proper family support, deficient maternity leave, and women have to take care of household works too. Women workers have to handle Persecution's at their work place, sometimes just over look things to ensure that their job is not jeopardized in anyway.

2. PROBLEMS FACED BY WORKING WOMEN

2.1 Occupational problems- a potential source of stress

In women Occupational stress is stress involving work. Work and family are the two most important aspects in women's lives. Balancing work and family roles has become a key personal and family issue for many societies. There are many facets in working mother's lives that subject to stresses. They deal with home and family issues as well as job stress on a daily basis. Imbalance between work and family leads to occupational stress.

2.2 Mental harassment

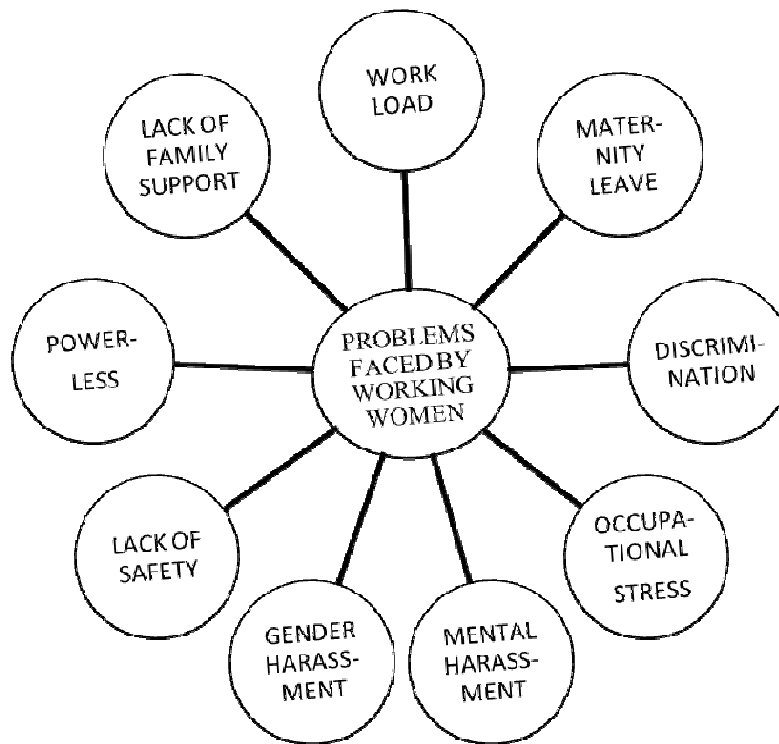
It is an age old convention that women are less capable and inefficient in working as compared to men. The attitude which considers women unfit for certain jobs holds back women. In spite of the constitutional provisions, gender bias creates obstacles in their recruitment. In addition to this, the same attitude governs injustice of unequal salaries for the same job. The true equality has not been achieved even after 61 years of independence. Working in such conditions inevitably puts strain on women to greater extent as compared to men, thus making them less eager in their career. When women move up in the career ladder, men co-workers mentally do not like woman leadership, putting them into mental harassment.

2.3 Gender harassment

Today, almost all working women are prone to sexual harassment irrespective of their status, personal characteristics and the types of their employment. They face sexual harassment on their way on transports, at working places, educational institutions and hospitals, at home and even in police stations when they go to file complaints. It is shocking that the law protectors are violating and outraging modesty of women. Moreover, when lot of women are concentrated in jobs where men are in an immediate supervisory position, many of them make it as an opportunity to exploit their subordinate women.

2.4 Discrimination at Workplace

Indian women still face discrimination at their workplaces. They are often deprived of promotions and growth opportunities at work places but this doesn't apply to all working. A majority of working women continue to be denied their right to equal pay, under the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 and are underpaid and under promoted in comparison to their male colleagues. This is usually the case in factories and labour-oriented industries.



2.5 Lack of safety at workplace

Though it is claimed that women have got equality with men in the modern society, Safety to women in workplace is becoming a matter of high concern. The current day's newspapers and medias reports a list of sexual harassment that a women faces in her workplace every day.

2.6 Lack of Family Support

Lack of proper family support is another issue that working women suffers from. At times, the family doesn't support women to leave the household work and go to office. They also resist for women working till late in office which also hampers the performance of the women and this also affects their promotion. The orthodox mind-set in the Indian society makes it difficult for a working woman to balance her domestic environment with the professional life. In some families, it may not be acceptable to work after six o'clock.

Those families that do accept these working hours may experience considerable anxiety every day about a woman's safety while travelling. So many issues affect a working woman because she is closely protected or watched by her family and the society.

2.7 Insufficient Maternity Leaves

Insufficient maternity leave is another major issue that is faced by a working mother. This not only affects the performance of women employees at work, but is also detrimental to their personal lives.

2.8 Workload

Unrealistic expectations, especially in the time of corporate reorganizations, which sometimes puts unhealthy and unreasonable pressures on the women employee, can be a tremendous source of stress and suffering. Increased workload extremely long work hours and intense pressures to perform at peak levels all the time for the same pay, can actually leave a women employee physically and emotionally drained. Excessive travel and too much time away from family also contribute to her stressors.

2.9 Workplace Adjustment

Adjusting to the workplace culture, whether in a new company or not, can be intensely stressful. Making oneself adapt to the various aspects of workplace culture such as communication patterns of the boss as well as the co-workers, can be lesson of life. Maladjustments to workplace cultures may lead to subtle conflicts with colleagues or even with superiors. In many cases office politics or gossips can be major stress inducers, in the case of women employees.

2.10 Powerless

While women are guaranteed equality under the constitutions, legal protection has little effect in the face of prevailing patriarchal traditions. Women lack power to decide when and who they will marry, and are often married off as children, and the same powerlessness is seen in workplaces too. They are not given opportunity to make major decisions, in most of the cases.

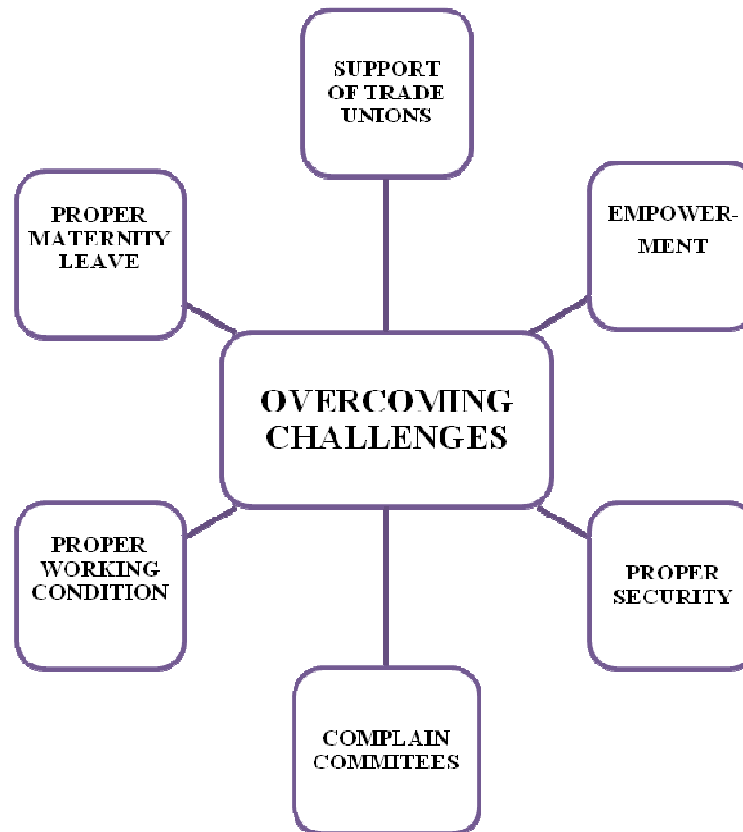
3. HOW TO OVERCOME THESE CHALLENGES

3.1 Forming grievance cell or complaints committee

The committee will listen to the complaints of women employee and investigate independently, keeping the identity of the employee under wrap. The usefulness of this kind of committee is very prevalent in sexual harassment cases. With this kind of investigation committee, women employees feel safer at workplaces. Besides, management should organize education campaigns for women employees about to help them know their rights.

3.2 Appropriate work condition

Employers should try to give suitable work situation to women to make sure that there is no unfriendly atmosphere for the female workers. The employers should make feel the women employees easy to come to them to share their problems.



3.3 Proper security

Proper security is one of the most important factors which are needed to be taken care of well by the employers. Besides, providing safe transport facility they have to ensure that women employees do not work late hours. If any case she needs to stay back to complete work, the office authority should take extra care of her security and safety.

3.4 Giving sufficient maternity Leave

Leaves and day care conveniences for working moms is something that employers should do to create a better work environment for ladies. There are several companies who have implemented programs to curb structural biases against women at workplace and invite their full participation in at all level of management and leadership.

3.5 Empowerment

Most importantly, women should have wholesome empowerment. When she is empowered in the real sense, she need not depend on others to protect her. It gives her confidence to work in par with her male counterparts in her workplace and workplace. If she

is truly empowered she can handle every other challenge a workplace and the society poses her and she can come out of it successfully.

3.6 Other form of supports

Strong support from trade union may help women to be powerful and to feel secured. And reduce the problem retrenchment of women by the management. Proper job rotation is another method which by reducing night shifts gives security to women. Moreover, strong support of social media and other networks will support women to feel free, and to feel secured.

4. CONCLUSION

However, they face a lot of challenges in their workplace. A successful working woman faces all these problems, handles it effectively as she is truly empowered. Whole some empowerment of women is the most important criteria to face challenges that their conventional society puts her in to be successful a women has to sculpt herself to be empowered and energized. Women are builders and moulder of nation's destiny. They are the supreme inspiration of men. When our country men were fighting and struggling to attain the freedom the women folks also fought shoulders to shoulders. Women are more dedicative, sincere, hardworking, and more devoted to the cause.

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