

Problems And Challenges Faced by Working Women of Organized Sector in India: A Sociological Analysis in The Context of Social Security

Dr. Paritosh Singh

Associate Professor, Sociology, D.B.S. (PG) College, Dehradun

Abstract—The social attitude to the role of women lags much behind the law. The attitude which considers women fit for certain jobs and not for others shades those who recruit employees. Thus, the women find employment easily as nurses, doctors, teachers and the caring and nurturing sectors, secretaries or in assembling jobs-the routine submissive sectors. But even if well qualified women engineers or managers or geologists are available, preference will be given to a male of equal qualification. A woman could still bear up with these problems if she had control over the money she earns. But in most families, even now, her salary is handed over to father, husband or in-laws. So, the basic motive for seeking employment of getting independence is nullified in many women's cases. The present study is carried to explore the real condition of Indian working women and investigates the factors preventing women employees from aspiring for higher posts. It also tries to identify the problems and challenges faced by working women of organized sector in India and at the same time clarify these issues and problems.

The present research paper is also to address role adjustment problems of women workers in organized sectors of Dehradun city, Uttarakhand State. It has been rationally hypothesized that women workers are at risk of experiencing role conflict by performing multiple roles both at work and family. Role conflict among women would cause negative implications for their functioning as employees and these tend to be addressed by the employer, in this case the organized sectors. In the recent past women in India are still lacking behind in gaining employment opportunities and adjusting with the existing working conditions in organized sectors in particular. It is fascinating to ascertain empirically the extent of role conflict among working women in the organized sectors. An attempt is also made in the study to ascertain the association between length of service, time spent with family and the extent of role conflict among working women. The present investigation is based on data collected from 30 working women, 10 each from teaching, banking,

corporate sector in the city of Dehradun. The findings seem to suggest that working women do not get sufficient time to manage household duties on the one hand and increasing pressure at work is preventing them from taking care of their family on the other.

Index Terms—Gender Discrimination, Organized Sector, Role Conflict, Sexual Harassment, Working women.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the history of human development, women have been as vital in the history making as men have been. In fact, higher status for women regarding employment and work performed by them in a society is a significant indicator of a nation's overall development. There are many reasons and problems that forced Indian women to work. The financial demands on the Indian families are increasing day by day. The sky rocketing cost of living, increasing expenses on education of children, increasing cost of housing properties in India force every family in India to look for ways and means of increasing the household income. As a result, women in India who were mostly known as homemakers are forced to go for jobs and take up even careers that were considered only suitable for men such as working in night shifts in call centres. Working women in India are faced with lot more challenges than their counterparts in other parts of the world. Besides of so many efforts from past years, female section of society is deprived in compared to male section. They are not given first priority in social and economic decisions in her own family. According to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report, women are involved in doing 67% work of world,

still they are socially and economically deprived. They are receiving only 10% of the universal income and have 1% part in global assets. This discrimination also persists in their work place in unorganized sector. In informal sector, women workers don't get same wages for same nature of work for same hours done by men. They are exploited at workplace. There are some acts like the Unorganized Workers Social Security Act, 2008, Domestic Workers Welfare and Social Security Act, 2010 etc. but due to their improper implementation, women workers are forced to work and live in miserable conditions in unorganized sector. In India, men don't share on most of the household chores, it is women who have to cook, clean the house, do the dishes, wash clothes, get their children ready for school etc. On an average, women lost 2 hours of sleep per day and up to 14 hours sleep per week and if they happened to work in a highly pressurized environment, they have to bring their work home and that cuts few more hours of their sleep. It is not just about the reduced sleep, but such a lifestyle builds stress. It was alright for women to handle all the chores as long as they were homemakers. Now with their increasing need for getting some income for the family, they have to work all the harder. They have to take up a 9 to 5 job plus handle all the household chores that they handled as a homemaker. They have to handle harassments at their work places, sometimes just over look things to ensure that their job is not threatened in anyway. Overall, majority of women in India live in a hope that things will change. Some of us have given up that hope and learnt to accept that nothing can be done about it. India has a long way to go before our women will be able to live their lives to the full.

The role of women worldwide is undergoing a dramatic change. Women today share the podium with men in almost all fields, be it kitchen or in defence working women are no longer a rarity and are now accepted as an integral part of the working force. Women are over the world are the concerned with the issue of gender equality women all rights are geared towards the elimination of discrimination – gender discrimination and are in tune with the human rights ideology. For women to gain control of their lives, to achieve equality in society, they need to be empowered. Empowerment literally means making

someone powerful, facilitating the weak to attain strength, to increase one's self-esteem, to help someone to be assertive / self confident, to enable someone to confront justice and oppression and to support someone to fight for rights. Empowering women actually means strengthening them to confront family, community, caste, religion and traditional forces, patriarchal forces and biases working within government departments. Women empowerment is interpreted in development agenda as participation in decision making increased access to productive resources, expanded choices, rights and control over body and life.

Working women today form a crucial segment of the society. As a whole in the country, although the status of the working women is improving still in a majority of lower- or middle-class families, which yet uphold the age-old inferior status of the women, the working women's importance is not allowed to improve. They are still expected and, in some cases, compelled to do the whole household works in addition to her working full time of the work place. Though she is contributing significantly to the family, yet she is kept under the grip of her spouse and is made to surrender herself to the decisions of her husband or in-laws are regards to the whole matters of the household. Thus, in a lower, middle class or upper middle class joint family set up in which in-laws stay, working women's role seldom change. There she used to work similar to the non-working women, though in the process, she becomes more tired than the latter due to the dual role she is compelled extent upon the liberal outlook and endorsement for improving the socio-economic role of the women, by all members at family and community level. To add to that, if the household workloads is rationally shared by all the members of the family relieving her from excess workload, that will also pave the way for improvement in her health, relief in stress and consequently the socio-economic role. The problems confronted by the working women are enormous as well as varied and that also differs under different regions and different professions. And moreover, as these problems have a strong bearing on their different aspects of life, i.e., health, socio-economic conditions etc. To examine the same a lot of studies have been undertaken. To make a brief analysis of the studies on the problems

we need to review some relevant studies on this issue.

India has now several women working as pilots, driving locomotives, buses, tractors and machinery in workshops. Sex as maternal factor in the area of legal rights has practically disappeared. It is, therefore, not reasonable to demote women as a group to an inferior position in society. The Constitution does not regard sex as a permitted classification and prohibits sex as a basis of differential treatment in all areas of legal rights. Modernity has resulted in a growing flexibility and changes in the gender roles of men and women. The earlier conception that man was the provider of basic necessities for family and women the child bearer and care taker of house, is no longer valid in the changing social structure and economic compulsions. Working women refers to those in paid employment. They work as lawyers, nurses, doctors, teachers and secretaries etc. There is no profession today where women are not employed. However, it is true that working women have to face problems by virtue of their sex. For centuries, women have been subjected to exploitation and torture physically, sexually and mentally. There are innumerable problems and challenges faced by women both at home and work place.

II. PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES FACED BY WORKING WOMEN IN INDIA

Work and family are the two most important aspects in women's lives. Balancing work and family have become a key issue for many women in society. There are many facets in working mother's lives that are subject to the stresses and problems. Some of the main problems are highlighted as under:

01. 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 more than 70 years of independence. In order to achieve success in corporate sector, women

feel that they must do better than their male colleagues. This leads to higher expectations and efficiency by their bosses and subordinates. Working in such conditions inevitably puts strain on women to greater extent as compared to men, thus making them less eager in their career.

02. SEXUAL 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 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. Most of the women tend to be concentrated in the poor service jobs whereas men are in an immediate supervisory position which gives them an opportunity to exploit their subordinate women.

03. DISCRIMINATION AT WORKPLACE

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

04. NO SAFETY OF WORKING WOMEN WHILE TRAVELLING

Typically, the orthodox mindset 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.

05. 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.

06. JOB INSECURITY

Unrealistic expectations, especially in the time of corporate reorganizations, which sometimes puts unhealthy and unreasonable pressures on the 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 an employee physically and emotionally drained. Excessive travel and too much time away from family also contribute to an employee's stresses.

07. 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.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

MATHUR (1992) in her study 'Women, Family and Work' shows that among various problems confronted by working women, the most commonly faced on is work overload leading to their physical or emotional exhaustion. The second problem faced by these women is the burden of performing crucial domestic chores under traditional expectations. The third problem encountered by these women, is keeping a smooth relationship with the members of her family. And the fourth problem often encountered by the working women, is the lack of favourable working conditions, risk and insecurity at work place.

KALA (1976) in her work deals exclusively with dual roles, i.e., home role (as wife as mother) and job role (occupational role). She examines dual role performance and consequent dilemmas faced by the working women. She finds that role-conflict is mainly a psychological phenomenon. Since women are traditional in perception roles, therefore, they do

not mind putting in long hours of works to satisfy household needs. Besides, individual expectations are also found to be related to the role conflict.

GULLENSTEN AND PALMER (2005) viewed in their study that women reported higher levels of stress compared to men. This is so because the stressors included, multiple roles, lack of career progress and discrimination and stereotyping. In considering the development of future conflict – management training programs, recent developments are done in the field of cognitive and social psychology which suggest that self control demands have an effect as a source of stress at work.

KAPUR (1970) in her work has cited that generally a working woman happily accept and manage dual roles, but conflict is felt by those who feel torn between the loyalty towards her job and loyalty towards her husband and children. She mentions that "intense conflict is possible where there is clash between two equally important roles with corresponding aspirations because of workload in both cases."

SOUJA (1963) reveals that the young working women's status is exposed to various psychological, social and household problems as they work under varied working conditions.

IV. OBJECTIVES

1. To locate the different causes relating to problems and challenges faced by working women.
2. To explore the factors preventing women employees from aspiring for higher posts.
3. To identify the problems and challenges faced by working women in India.
4. To find out the outcomes of problems and challenges faced by working women.
5. To provide some policy recommendations to overcome these problems.
6. To give suggestions to the corporate and women on problem solution management.

V. METHODOLOGY

The present study is confined to Dehradun city which is capital of Uttarakhand, located on Doon valley, with a population of about 16 lakhs as per 2011 census. The city is considered as educational hub because it has many universities, almost twenty ten-degree colleges, twelve engineering colleges, four polytechnics and other several educational institutions such as schools and coaching centres both for boys and girls. These educational facilities also play an important role in attracting more people from rural areas.

The present study is initial part of the research work for which a sample of 30 working women has been taken. In the sample 30 respondents (10 from banks, 10 from universities and colleges, 10 from corporate sector) has been selected to analyse their opinion about stress and coping practices in this study. We have used interview schedule and observation techniques for collecting maximum information from respondents. The researcher personally visited every family and tried to collect information keeping in view the objective of the present study.

the increased level of stress and adjustment problems in women. The women are mostly treated as marginalised to society and its tradition. Born as a woman, she has no freedom in social / economic / political and cultural arena of life. The women in India have always been relegated to a secondary status vis-à-vis men. The research was supervised to see a percentage of women faced inequalities and discrimination. They were of the view that in this male dominated society due to a “glass ceiling” women were departed of top positions.

In today’s world decision making is the process to exercise power to plan and allocate the available resources as per one’s priorities and requirements in the family so the person who performs the decision making has more power over the control and disbursement of the household resources in comparison to other members. 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 more than 70 years of independence. In order to achieve success in corporate sector, women feel that they must do better than their male colleagues. This leads to higher expectations and efficiency by their bosses and subordinates. Working in such conditions inevitably puts strain on women to greater extent as compared to men, thus making them less eager in their career. 23 out of 30 respondents felt stressed about mental harassment which is 76.66 percent of the sample size faced different mental harassment related problems in the patriarchal society.

Another concern for problems of sexual harassment in working women was found to be a new job switch or increased responsibility. 12 respondents reported this reason as a problem and challenge towards them. It is one of the major causes of stress and adjustment. It was found that more than 40 percent of the women were under high levels of stress due to the sexual harassment and eve teasing. Further it was seen that working women faced these problems due to lack of security.

It has also found that discrimination at workplace was also a big problem which faced women to work. Due to this problem which is 70.00 percent of the

TABLE-01

Sr. No.	Problems and Challenges faced by working Women	Total no. Of cases who reported this reason	% of the cases to the sample
01	Mental harassment	23	76.66
02	Sexual harassment	12	40.00
03	Discrimination at Workplace	21	70.00
04	No Safety of Working Women While Travelling	24	80.00
05	Lack of Family Support	21	70.00
06	Job insecurity	21	70.00
07	Workplace Adjustment/Pressure	25	83.33

VI. RESULTS

It was analysed from the above table that there are various problems and challenges which contribute to

sample size, women were working under pressure. They were ignored due to patriarchal setup and not provided key post or public dealing post at the workplace.

Another problem faced by working women was unhealthy work environment and no safety of working women while travelling. Unfair discrimination exists in the work place, partly because women themselves are unaware of their potentialities and shy away from certain work imaging them incapable. Another difficulty faced by women in the work place is resistance from men to accept them as colleagues and more so as seniors in responsible position. More than 80 percent of the women respondents were found in stress due to the above stated problem. They are facing such problem often at workplace and during the time of travelling by public transport.

21 out of 30 women stated that the lack of family support is another big problem faced by working women. This resulted in the lack of concentration towards work and led to stress. The study reveals that 70.00 percent working women reported this problem during the above stated reason. They reported this reason as a cause of stress and adjustment faced problems in their personal life. In today's world of liberalised society more and more women are stepping out their house and are giving tough competition to this male dominated society. This requires spending a considerable amount of time in work. In today's world of increasing competition, the working hours – prolonged which requires sitting late in the office. This is creating a misbalance in the personal and professional life of women.

70.00 percent of working women are facing the problem of job insecurity especially in the education field and they feel that if they were permanent, they could have developed better and faced fewer problems. In the current environment, job insecurity is particularly high in the education sector, where working women face even more challenges.

The current study reveals that more than 83% of working women are experiencing high work pressure in their workplace. While working women are expected to embrace a sense of collectivism in their domestic roles, they are often required to adopt a self-serving approach in the workplace. This creates a

situation of role conflict that subjects them to immense mental stress.

VII. FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Women have constituted a growing portion of the workforce for several decades. Initially women used to take up employment activity until their marriage. But at present they are continuing employment even after their marriage and even after they become mothers. Today unmarried female employees, married female employees and working mothers are steadily increasing. Women employees presently limited their careers to selected jobs and organizations. But they will be ready to take up all types of jobs in different types by organizations. As a part of the research work, an initial survey was done with a sample of 30 women to have their views on the stress in working women, during the study there was many findings. Some of which were surprising in nature. It was observed that women going through personal or family problems tend to carry their worries and anxieties to their workplace. Both wife and husband will be loaded with grievances and problems as both of them share their problems and grievances both at work and off the work. In other's words, husband's problems would be his own problems and the problems of his wife are her own both at work and at home. Similarly, wife's problems in dual career couples will be her domestic problems, job problems and work-related and non work problems of her husband.

A majority of respondents started different reasons by which they are experiencing stress. Out of the many few of the largely reported causes are discussed, the major cause of stress in working women was found to be family disturbance. Women work at their work places and after returning home do the household chores. Their social or family life is reduced to zero level. They just lead a mechanical life. They have no time for recreation, extra burden because of household work is primary, comments and criticism from family members, undue expectations from others, husband getting irritated, more demand for money by in-law's family members and greater expectations from own parents/brothers/sisters.

During the study some of the women repeated that switching job or increase in the responsibility of the

work place also caused the stress in their minds as their workload is increased, due to fatigue and mental pressure they experience stress and of last result in loss of health. Due to the overloaded work schedule, their health suffers and a tensed or unhappy, disturbed environment craps up in the home. Many women were also of the view that living in joint families and keeping at pace with today's competitive world proved to be a big tension and they felt stressed out by the feeling that their identify will be lost in doing only the household chores. The daily conflict between the daughter-in-laws and mother-in-laws forced them to adopt the nuclear family approach and divorce. The women who lived with their in-laws were more stressed than those living in nuclear families. The reason they gave was lack of support from the in-laws as well as from the spouse. The expectations are more and nobody is ready to adjust with them. Lack of proper rest due to increased business and responsibilities created many health-related problems leading to depression, hormonal imbalance, loss of sleep and many more. Some of the women also said that due to financial problems they are forced to work so that they can provide a helping hand to support their family. Almost all of the working women were of the view point that the gender biases also added to them stress. They said that despite of performing well they are banned from the hikes or promotions and no reason is given to them but the actual reason that was found in this male dominated society and in survey the most men are not ready to work under women. It is their psychology that women are made to work and receive orders and not giving orders to them. Unhealthy work environment also contributed to a great extent in adding to the women's stress. The world has accepted them to step out and work but still the different treatment is given to them. Passing on nasty remarks, abuses and unhygienic language and body movements make them feel very uncomfortable. Even at the, they are not supported. Instead, they are told to leave the job and better to stay at home. Their plight goes into the trash box and they silently bear all the sufferings.

All this create a mental pressure in the minds of women which contributes to a great amount in increasing the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, strokes. It is suggested to the working

women to avoid taking too much stress. To take proper sleep and rest so that the mind and body is relaxed and the symptoms of stress are vanished. The family members of the respondents to be supportive and encouraging. Their motivation and support may work leaps and bounds in encouraging them organizations are also suggested to take care of the work culture that no abusive language or any unhealthy activities is incorporated while dealing with ladies' strict action should be taken against them who do so.

Women's equality in power sharing and active participation in decision making in family matters. Systems lead the development of a good family, good society and ultimately a good nation. As of view, the Indian Government has taken several steps towards empowering women, yet it requires some more effective policy measures for the participation and co-operation of men as they benefit by having educated mothers, wives, daughters and sisters. Undoubtedly, the economic empowerment will allow raising women's self awareness, skill development, creative decision making and may lead to produce better citizens and modern India.

Conditions of working women in India have improved considerably in the recent years. Ironically, despite the improvement in their status, they still find themselves dependent on men. It is because of the fact that man in patriarchal society has always wielded economic independence and power to take decision. Since the working woman earns an independent income in the same patriarchal set-up where the basic infrastructure of society has hardly changed, though her own role within the same structure is passing through a transitional phase, it is but natural that she would remain vulnerable to exploitation even in her economically independent state. Society perhaps yet needs to accord due recognition to women to take the lead role and women at the same time, need to be oriented vigorously towards assuming this role in the society. The problems of self-employed women workers are multi-dimensional. These can be solved by the coordinated efforts of self-employed women workers, coordinated functioning of promotional agencies and government assistance without red tape or bureaucratic delays. The self-employed women workers have to be educated and she should have a

proper training in acquiring the necessary skill in running an enterprise. Once all the problems are soothed out there is no looking back at all. Women are capable of being as good as or even better than men in business. If formal training is imparted to women, they could acquire skills required and can contribute in a big way to the nation's prosperity. Given the right opportunities and encouragement they will be very successful and eventually overcome all the problems.

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