

“A STUDY ON WORKING WOMEN: LIFE IN DOUBLE SHIFT”

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ABSTRACT

There was a time when Indian woman was considered just a caregiver in the society. Now named as AADHI ABADI, woman is contributing in every walk of life, be it business, education, service sector or disseminating the news all over the world. Overall they are now a very crucial part of the economy of the country. They have crossed many deep water rivers to come up to this stage. Their fight was not about the increasing amount of responsibilities, but with the social taboos, mindset of the people which unfortunately exist in upper high class business niche as well which reflects in working and hiring processes of companies. Time and again they have proved that with hard work and dedication, woman has much more efficiency to take up responsibilities and capability to fulfill all their duties. But this journey of finding a new identity carried various challenges for themselves. To mark their presence in a patriarchal society and to find a new identity besides a homemaker, woman had to extend not only their physical limitations but mental immunity and strength as well. Going out of the home was a challenging step as this process included many approvals of the family and society. Handling office work culture with basic motherly concerns back in the mind always put a working mother on toes. Running on the needles of the clock in such a hectic life schedule, working women are juggling their duties from one place to another. Important aspect of their struggle is that even after a long period of struggle, working women have not been treated equally as their male colleagues.

Keywords : working women, struggle, gender equality, social mindset.

Introduction

Women have always been an integral part of the society. Since ancient time, they have been appreciated for their intellectual thinking and decision making capacity. In any society, male and female components are two basic elements of a modern society, where both complement each other. Both of them constitute almost half of the population and several sociologists and research scholars have done studies on their relationship and status around the world and India in particular. Women and men are two wheels of a vehicle, where each of them is important for a ride of the life. If one is neglected or not taken care of, the vehicle will not function. Women who have been considered a caregiver to the entire family, have now an opportunity to prove, that their existence is more than a caregiver in the family.

New life of working women

Since when women have started their new journey of fulfilling their dreams beyond being a homemaker, they are living a new life. This life is full of challenges yet happiness and self satisfaction is also part of it. They enjoy extreme level of hard work in office, taking care of their kids, doing household things and planning for the next day because it gives them immense pleasure of being a special person having unique qualities.

Work-life balance

One of the major reasons for the upliftment and progress of women in various organizations is the balance between family and working life. Work-life balance or imbalance leaves deep impression in the professional life of a person. In case of female employees, as they have to work double, for their family and for their job, it is again a tough task. Earlier researches have indicated that women, getting support from the family show more positive sign in the field and get more frequent promotion. Reason being they are filled with confidence and joy as they have no mental pressure on them about their family. There are other demographic factors like marital status, family structure and nature of job which matters a lot. Commitment towards the family is always the priority of a woman. When she starts working, her first preference is her family. Her commitment towards the family is an important factor.

Commitment of women towards her family is also sometimes a hurdle in their career graph. In most of the organizations, employer feels that women will give preference to their children over the duty and that is the reason women do not considered as serious worker. This perspective reflects on the organizational HR policies, facilities and other benefits provided to all the employees. In certain cases, it has been observed that this image

is very harmful for those working women, who work hard and have the backup in their house to tackle family responsibilities.

Working mother's vs child care centers

Working women in India have to face a lot more challenges than in any other parts of the world. In our country, women have to do countless things starting from cooking, cleaning, dish cleaning to getting the children ready for the school. In general middle class family a male member is usually responsible for taking care of few outside chores of the family. It was alright for the women to handle everything till the time they were at home all the time. In the present scenario, where women are working in media in almost every weird shift, they have to work from home and sometimes the reporters or producers have to go for outdoor shoot. In these circumstances their most important concern is their family, especially the kids' responsibility. Here comes the role of a new emerging concept of crèche or child care centre which are providing a home like option for media and other working professionals and couples where they can leave their children for the day. This step takes a lot of brain storming to reach on it. Sometimes this also causes some troublesome situations but sometimes it helps media women to proceed in their career.

Life cycle and stress of working women in media

In a time of media convergence, media persons are living under extreme pressure of working on different platform with no compromise with the quality. As the financial pressure is increasing on the media houses, this pressure can clearly be seen passing on the employees. Multi-platform production, increasing trend of media convergence and better production quality are factors ruling the field of journalism now. People working in different capacities are going through a tremendous pressure to prove something extraordinary every time. Doing so, sometimes the work overflows to personal front. When the office work comes to home, the continuous news updates leave a sour taste on the family atmosphere. Especially working women journalists have to adjust this time from their own personal time, as they cannot cut the time for their children and family. Reduced sleep, physical ailing, bad relationship and lack of social interaction may be some of the outcomes. Researches reveal that women are very sincere for their work, but they are not willing to share burden of others in the office as they have works pending for them for the day. But in office environment, instead of quality, their constraints become hurdle in their image change and professional progression. In a way domestic as well as professional challenges clash with each other and that impact a hard working woman who dedicatedly working towards her career. Sometimes they are being taken for granted at the workplace by their male colleague. They also face weird kind of comments about their skills and expertise regarding the stream, which become daily affair in their life.

Struggle of single working mother

Considering the acute busy and sensitive time, it is more difficult for a single working woman to earn for her family. Her tensions and responsibilities are double as a single caretaker for the family and the kins. Office pressure and struggle of living as a single earning member makes it difficult for her in the society. But they are firmly fulfilling their duties while taking every social and moral responsibility towards her. The society has such a complicated structure, that the frustration and anguish of fulfilling the role of ideal wife and mother sometimes fill a woman with struggle. They keep on juggling between both the roles. But with a fine pace they are doing all the arrangements on their own and with the support of their families to keep their job and family life alive. Financial crunch may not be the only reason behind every working woman. It is their zeal to achieve a new identity besides working as a full time mother; they are going out of their limits to give themselves a new bundle of joy and energy

It is very unfortunate that their efforts on domestic front are not counted significantly. Though, a family witness a sharp fall in day to day activity in her absence, her effort is not recognized. In country like India, where a larger part of the population comes under middle or lower middle class families strata, women are generally stay at home and spend their whole life in childrearing. This unpaid and unrecognized phase of life was forced them back from the mainstream of development. Increasing number of working women in modern times depicts their state of mind regarding their point of view towards their life and way of living it. They are crucial part of our families, life and the emerging economy of the country and they cannot be underestimated.

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