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CHALLENGES FACED BY WORKING WOMEN AT WORKPLACE & FAMILY: A CASE STUDY OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN HAZARIBAG DISTRICT, JHARKHAND

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Abstract

A woman of today can never be considered backward in any way and in any circumstances, as she is already set to walk forward and side by side to their male counterparts. She had been forbidden for decades but now she is breaking all the societal prejudice to overrun the decade old perception that women can only be a better homemakers and care takers of her children. As a woman has stepped out of their boundaries and limitations to work for fulfilment of her physiological needs, a set of factors are also creating challenges in their ways such as workplace inequality, workplace stress, unequal remuneration, work life balance, gender gap, etc. Whereas in a family also she encounters some challenges such as housework to be woman's work, sick children to be taken care only by a woman, fulfilling work related commitments by a woman and to an extent managing most of the family affairs.

Keywords: Societal prejudice, physiological needs, workplace inequality, workplace stress, unequal remuneration, work life balance, gender gap.

Introduction

The Hindu mythology has a great deal of examples of goddesses who are praised and worshipped for their charismatic powers for defeating evils in the society and destroying devils affecting the life of human beings. But still the women in our society, who have impressions of goddesses, are treated as a cursed person who is crushed in every sphere of life as she may be a girl child, an adolescent, a teenager or an adult. For several decades she was considered as a commodity in her husband's family who was often treated as good for nothing by her in laws and husband. It is also rightly said that time changes everything after some time in the future. When the revolutionary changes were taking place in our country, initiated by various social reformers such as Savitribai Phule, Annie Besant, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and several others, their contributions in girl education and abolition of child marriage could never be forgotten. Despite of several objections from the people in the society, these reformers never stepped back with their goals. This turnaround change brought about by the social reformers, led girl education with a steady but continuous change in the society. People started considering the girls as a wealth to be preserved for a certain time period after which she was handed over to her husband's family, where she is supposed to start a fresh life with a new family and its members. Besides all the societal prejudice, a woman was required to step out of the traditional footprints to work for the family support. This step for a woman was surprisingly transforming her life but with a lot of challenges that working women faces in her workplace or are forced to face challenges as they are becoming independent and moving side by side with their male counterparts.

Objective of the Study

The primary objective undertaken by the researcher is used to determine the possible solution to a research problem. Hence, the following objectives are stated as

To identify the challenges faced by working women

To determine the status of workplace of a woman

To identify the constraints for working woman

To suggest few feasible solutions to overcome their challenges.

Literature Review

For a better knowledge and understanding of the topic undertaken for research and data analysis, there is a requirement of collection of firsthand information of related field which is acquired through review of literature. Hence, following literature review is carried out for the fulfilment of research purpose.

(Shettar & Sheshgiri, 2015) The authors in their study on 'A Study on Issues and Challenges of Women Empowerment in India' have tried to focus on the study of economic, social and political empowerment of women which proves a significant gap between various government policies related to economic, social and political advancement and the actual practice at the community level. The objectives undertaken were related to need and awareness of women empowerment, hindrances and factors influencing economic empowerment of women and government schemes for women empowerment. Women empowerment is needed because women are



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deprived of decision making, education, employment, exposure to media, etc. Some hindrances women face includes gender discrimination, financial constraint, lack of education, dowry, family responsibility, female infanticide, social status, etc. To identify the status of women in India the authors considered the Global Gender Gap Index-2012 of 135 countries in which India's overall index rank was 105 with a score of 0.6442. The key findings include few areas where women empowerment is lacking, need for women to be embraced by men, women empowerment primarily seeking guarantee of health and safety, and even by improving their economic and social status. They suggested compulsory education for women, awareness program for women of weaker section, equal remuneration and status elevation and strict implementation of programmes and acts for women empowerment.1

(Nisa, 2013), in her study on 'Time constraint of working mothers- A sociological study' have tried exploring the various constraints faced by a working mother of Kashmir when she is out for her job. Though their aspirations for a better lifestyle are rising day by day, yet they are required to pay a cost in terms of their negligence towards family life. Thus, the role of a working mother is prolonged rearing and caring during infancy of child, development of emotional psychology of the child and valuable training of discipline and self-control. It was found that children, who were showered with love and affection traditionally in Kashmiri society, were lost. Due to substantial changes in the family organization working mother now have to complete outside work as well as domestic work which suppress her to spend less time with her children or attend their physiological needs. The author's analysis revealed that the presence of a mother is required for physical and mental development of a child. An infrastructure is needed to be developed in the form of a crèche, day care centre, etc. to compensate time lapse by working women to care for her child. Besides this working woman must be entitled for more leave and holidays with nearby postings from their home. Lastly, the family members of a working mother have to change to accommodate the transformed life of a woman.2

Research Methodology

This research paper is exploratory and analytical in nature. The sources of data used for analysis is primary which includes respondents from private school in Hazaribag and secondary data is collected from books, journals and online materials. A close ended questionnaire with open ended questions for demographic profile is also included in the questionnaire. Sampling technique used is random stratified and a total of 28 respondents were questioned for data collection.

Challenges faced by working women in India

As the women started confronting the hardships of managing home as well as their tasks at job, they frequently started facing challenges both at workplace and family. Some of the common challenges which these working women face throughout the country are gender discrimination, lack of education, family responsibility, sacrificing of personal ambitions, financial constraints, difficulty in attaining social status and even the evils of society in the form of dowry, domestic violence, child marriage and humiliation faced regularly within the family. The World Economic Forum responsible for measurements and publication of Gender Gap Index Report has ranked India to 140 among 156 countries, with a score of 0.625 out of one.

Challenges faced by Women of Pvt. Schools in Hazaribag

Out of the several options available for job as in health, commercial establishment, business, as vendor, domestic works, etc. for a woman is in the field of education which can be treated as a safest place for work for any woman if she is qualified enough to hold that job. Herein, the research study includes private school teachers of Hazaribag from Holy Cross School, St. Michael School, St. Robert's +2 High School and New Academic Height Public School. Some critical challenges faced by female teachers in private school are as follows-

Workplace inequality

Most commonly it is observed that teacher in private schools undergo workplace inequality if it is a matter of fair and unfair treatment as compared to the male teachers.

Workplace stress

Working women specially the teachers are very easily prone to stressful situation, if it comes to overloaded class schedules in shortage of teaching staff, administrative constraints and ill treatment from higher authorities, etc. The probability of stress influencing their life is always distressful leading to lowering productivity.

¹ Shettar, R M & Sheshgiri, S M, A Study on Issues and Challenges of Women Empowerment in India, IOSR Journal of Business and Management, Vol. 17, Issue 4, Apr 2015, pp 13-19

² Nisa, Sham S, Time Constraint of working mothers- A sociological study, IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social science, Vol. 15, Issue 6, Sep-Oct 2013, pp107-113



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Unequal remuneration

Government policies are very less applicable to teaching and non-teaching staff of private institutions. It is also seen that when it comes to promotion and remuneration to be paid to male and female teachers, males are given more privilege, as they are more dedicated to schools than their home affairs.

Work life balance

For a working woman like the teachers, are mostly becoming the prey to a situation where she has to differentiate her work from that of her family life. A teacher needs to balance her work life in a distinct way, that will make them accomplish school tasks in the school itself, rather than performing school related tasks at home.

Gender gap

A familiar challenge that teachers tend to face at school level is considered as gender gap, since without an appropriate qualification, i.e., PG, B.Ed., a teacher is not favored for recruitment. This gap is increasing day by day as women are deprived from attaining education and politically not stronger enough to stand alone for struggle. Male teachers are recruited easily as compared to female teachers.

Besides the workplace challenges, there are other challenges too, which are faced by the female teachers in their family. These challenges are as follows:

Housework to be woman's work

Most of the female respondents agreed to this condition that all the household works are always considered to be the work of woman, who is not supported by their husbands. It is the result of societal prejudice, which still prevails in our society.

Fulfilling work related commitments by a woman

If a family life is to be considered for a teacher in Hazaribag, she always claims that for most of the work at home, requires the commitment for task accomplishment only by a woman and not the man. Although she has to leave for school by 7:30 am, then also she is required to complete most of the cooking and cleaning work before moving out and make arrangements for the night as well, when she returns back from school.

Managing most of the family affairs

A female teacher being a working woman and a homemaker is always found responsible to manage most of the family affairs concerned with caring of children and old parents, financial management of house expenditures, maintenance of house, developing discipline in children, maintaining the family status in low income and many more.

Hence, by going through the above mentioned organizational and family related aspects, it can be said that working women whether a nurse, doctor, engineer or a teacher, has to face challenges in life when she is desired to step out for self-satisfaction or to support her family with extra income to fulfil all her physical and psychological needs.

Data Analysis and interpretation

In order to identify the challenges of working women (i.e. teachers), status of workplace of teachers and some of the job constraints arising out of the type of work teachers are performing in the school, the data collected from 28 teachers from different private schools of Hazaribag will be analysed here using the graphical and percentage method. For checking internal consistency of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha test is conducted, using the following equation-

$$\frac{k}{k-1} \left(\frac{\sum_{i \neq j}^k cov(x_i, x_j)}{var(x_0)} \right) = \frac{k}{k-1} \left(1 - \frac{\sum_{j=1}^k var(x_j)}{var(x_0)} \right)$$

After considering the 13 questions from the questionnaire, when different variables are put into the above equation, it is found that the value of Cronbach's α is 0.7195, which proves the internal consistency of the questionnaire to be 'Acceptable'.



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Percentage analysis of age of teachers (respondents) in private schools results in 35.71%, who are under the age group of 30-35 years. Only 3.57% of teachers form the least number who are under the age of 40-45 years.

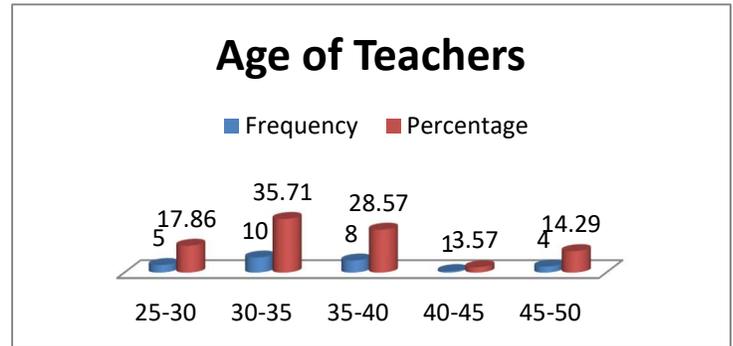


Chart1: Age of teachers in percentage

Table 1. Percentage of teachers who encounter different challenges at workplace and in family.

	Always	Very Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
01. How often your colleagues support you to complete your work?	35.71	28.57	21.43	14.29	0.00
02. Does your colleague complete your work in your absence?	25.00	14.29	39.29	10.71	10.71
03. Do you achieve your work related targets in stipulated time with available resources	60.71	21.43	10.71	7.41	0.00
04. How often you are supported by your colleagues for your work related grievances?	10.71	25.00	53.57	10.71	0.00
05. How often your family members support you in your job or work?	60.71	10.71	21.43	7.14	0.00
06. How often are you appreciated for providing financial support at home?	60.71	7.14	25.00	3.57	3.57
07. Do you find your physical location suitable for your job?	50.00	35.71	10.71	3.57	0.00
08. Is being a woman at work place affect you in your career growth?	10.71	14.29	25.00	14.29	35.71
09. How often the job-related stress affects your performance at work?	0.00	10.71	46.43	14.29	28.57
10. How often your negligence on technological knowledge is affecting your career growth?	3.57	14.29	53.57	14.29	14.29
11. Do you receive promotion or salary increment on time or on regular basis?	39.29	10.71	10.71	7.14	32.14
12. Is your monthly income sufficient to meet your physiological needs?	3.57	3.57	50.00	10.71	32.14
13. Do you have any pressure for working from your family members?	3.57	0.00	3.57	10.71	82.14

Interpretation of Data

From the data analysed and being presented for 28 respondents of some private schools under teaching category, in tabular format, it is found that, more than 60% of teachers in private schools of Hazaribag feel their colleagues support overcoming various challenges at work. More than 60% of teachers said that they are supported and appreciated by their family members. But 35% of them also mention that the status of workplace is not favourable for working as social security is lacking in private schools. Finally, it is also observed that more than 46% teachers sometimes feel job constraints to influence their work and life at workplace and in family.



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Findings and conclusion

The study undertaken it has been found that apart from the above interpretations, teachers try to engage themselves in teaching because of following reasons as to be self-dependent, to earn money to support the family, to improve economic status, for self-development and self-satisfaction, for livelihood, for children education and for a good living standard.

Hence it may be concluded that although women have chosen teaching as a profession yet they are moderately satisfied with the condition of their work and whatever she earn is not sufficient to fulfil her physiological needs.

Suggestions

As a researcher in this definite topic, there is a proactive suggestion to the governing bodies of private schools in Hazaribag district as follows-

1. Proper regulation must be prepared for stability of teachers.
2. Definite pay scale with regular increment must be adopted by schools.
3. Additional benefits and security must be provided to these teachers.

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