

Challenges faced by Working Women in Government Sector of Lohaghat

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ABSTRACT

The focus of the study is to highlight the problems of working women in Government sector of Lohaghat. A sample of 30 formally employed women belonging to dual earner families under the age group of 25-40 years were selected from Government sector under three major categories depending upon where women are mostly employed in rural areas *i.e.* Government Schools, Government colleges, Government Banks and other Government departments such as PWD and SDM court using simple random sampling. Descriptive analysis is used for highlighting the problems faced by working women in Government sector. Results reveal that working women are facing a variety of problems. Further the study tries to explain the real condition of working women and also make an effort to clear main problems of working women. The present study undertakes of investigate the so far unexplored problem of working women to balance their personal and professional life now a days. Studies have identified several variables like the size of family, the age of children, the working hours, behavior of head/boss and the satisfaction level regarding the job, the level of staff support etc.

Key Words : Working women, Government organization, Challenges and problems, Rural areas

INTRODUCTION

Uttarakhand is a state of the Himalayan region with a geographical area of 5348 square kilometers, 85% of which is hilly in which 70% of the population lives in rural areas. The total population of Uttarakhand is 1,00,86,292 out of which 51,37,773 are males and 49,48,519 are females (Census 2011). According to Annual Report of the periodic labor force survey (PLFS) from July 2020 to June 2022 in normal conditions the worker population ratio is 39.6%. The number of workers in rural areas is 26.6% for women. On the other hand in urban areas the number of female workers is 17.37%.

Every women works but some women get paid for their work and some housewives do not get any salary for their work. However, gender discrimination remains constant in the lives of both types of women. Discussing the problem of working women, in India women are facing

a lot more challenges than their counterparts in the other parts of the world. In India men do not share most of the household chores and it is a women who has to cook, clean the house, wash clothes, get their children ready for school etc. So the major burden of running a family is on the shoulders of women. On the other hand, they also have to look after the work of their workplace. Dube (2001) India's patriarchal society thinks of women only as homemakers and sexual objects and is generally subjected to exploitation and torture.

Our focus in this research is on The Problems Faced by Working Women in Government Sector of Lohaghat .

General problems faced by working women from the point of view of society as a whole:

Mittal *et al.* (2015), The major problem faced by women is stress caused by role conflict or multiple roles. Women generally play multiple roles like managing work

at their organization, managing family at home and fulfill other obligation towards the society. Working women with rigid schedules report more family difficulties than working women with flexible schedules. These problems arise due of the theme –constraints a working women has while fulfilling the obligation towards their family and work.

Types of challenges and risks faced by women working in rural areas:

Working women in rural areas face a lot of physical and emotional challenges. In the present study we have categorized the Government sectors into three major categories depending upon where women are mostly employed in rural areas.

1. Government School
2. Government Colleges
3. Government Banks

Some of the major challenges faced by working women in government sector are:

Table 1 : Categorization of challenges faced by working women	
Problems at workplace	Problems at family
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental /physical harassment • Balance work in life • Workplace adjustment • Problems faced in workplace • Discrimination at workplace • Unequal opportunities in job 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of family support • Responsibility of family • Time management in family • The role of family responsibility working women in the society • Health problems

According to Kumari (2014) data revealed that 44 % of females responded that they find it difficult to manage family life and professional life. Because they have to go home to the family and attend the household chores and take care of their families. They wished for some definite coping strategies to aid them to carry all workload and still be able to take care of their private issues. The study also showed that mental and physical stress lacks proper balance between work and family, unfair treatment in the workplace, mental/physical harassment and workplace, discrimination etc. are the challenges which the working women have to face in government sectors.

Objectives of the study:

The major focus of this research study is to investigate the problem of formally employed women in schools, colleges, bank and other government sectors of Lohaghat.

1. To find out the challenges faced by working women in Government sector of Lohaghat.
2. To suggest ways to overcome the challenges faced by working women in Government sector.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Lohaghat, a block of Champawat District of Uttarakhand to ensure optimum personal contacts for data collection as the researcher is pursuing her Doctoral degree from there. The Sample consisted of 30 working women in Government sector of Lohaghat, under the age of 25-40 years.

From all the subjects that fulfilled the eligibility criteria, a final sample of 30 women was selected by using simple random technique.

The investigator approached the selected sample (working women in Government sector of rural areas) in various localities of Lohaghat. The purpose of the study was made clear to the respondents. They were requested to give their responses and were assured that their identity would be kept confidential and information provided by them would be used exclusively for the purpose of research work. When the respondents were satisfied with the assurance given to them, the tools were administered on them to procure data regarding the study.

A performa was developed to get the information about the background details and challenges faced by them in their personal and professional lives. The proforma was the principal instrument used for collection of primary data. It was designed keeping in mind a set of closed and open-ended questions.

The methodology followed a questionnaire based survey among the rural working women. The questionnaire consisted of various aspects of the study in addition to details of the respondents. Data were collected using the personal contact approach. Questionnaires were distributed to a sample of 30 working women located in Lohaghat block. Some related questions were asked to them and the comments were noted down. These discussions also elicited information and data that have been discussed in the next chapter.

The questionnaire consisted of 18 close ended and

4 open ended questions to meet the objectives of the study. The questionnaire included rural working women's issues related key parameters like sexual and mental harassment, family care issues, discrimination based on gender, workplace discrimination and prejudices, safety and security issues etc. The statements for the questionnaire were formed after consulting relevant literature and some preliminary study conducted in the area. Besides the major scale, the survey questionnaire also included a section to capture the general profile of respondents. They were asked about background including age, qualification level, designation, religion and caste, years of experience, nature of organization etc.

The items were categorized and percentage for each category was calculated to find out the challenges faced by the working women. On the bases of results obtained, suggestions were given to the working women to overcome the challenges they are facing in their personal and professional lives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In every study, it is essential to know the background information in which enquiry has been concluded *i.e.* the personal and familial details of the sample. For the present study the sample consists of 30 working women belonging to Government sector of Lohaghat rural areas are included.

Given in table provide the information regarding selected background variables or parameters and Distribution of subjects as per each category. The personal information of the respondents which might influence the present investigation is described further in detail. The study addresses the following key research objectives:

1. To find out the challenges faced by the working women in Government sector of Lohaghat.
2. To suggest ways to overcome the challenges faced by the working women in Government sector of Lohaghat.
3. The questionnaire consisted of 18 close ended and 4 open ended questions to meet the objectives of the study. The items in the questionnaire included rural working women issues related key parameters like sexual and mental harassment, promotion and issues, family care issues, Discrimination based on gender, workplace discrimination and prejudices, safety and security issues etc.

Organization:

From the Data, it can be observed that a total of 40 % of women were found working in a school, 26.67 % of women in college and 23.33 % of women were seen working. In the bank 10 % of women were found to be working in other work areas (Table 2).

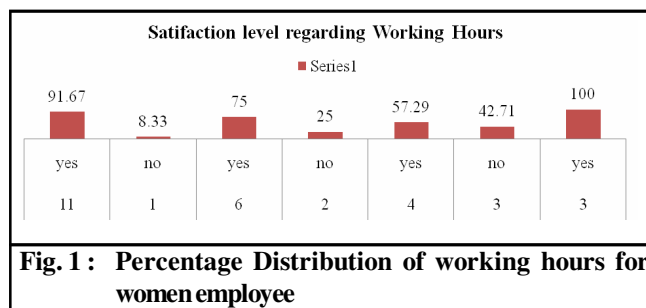
Sr. No.	Category Organization	Frequency	Percentage %
1.	Schools	12	40
2.	Colleges	8	26.67
3.	Banks	7	23.33
4.	Other	3	10

Hence, from the data obtained it was observed that all the majority of the women working in Govt. Banks and other organizations were having the longest working hours, followed by the women working in Govt. Colleges and Schools. They face distress because of multi-tasking responsibilities at office and at home (Table 3).

Sr. No.	Category Organization (hours)	Working Hours	Frequency	Percentage %
1.	Schools	7	12	100
2.	Colleges	7	8	100
3.	Bank's	8	7	100
4.	Other	7	2	66.67
		8	1	33.33

Devi and Rani (2016) Daily chores, cooking and cleaning are primarily a woman's responsibility. Long workhours along with pressure of childcare has an exacerbating effect on the work-family conflict.

Upon we conclude from the data that women working in Govt. schools were most satisfied with the working hours and women working in other organizations and Govt. Banks were least satisfied (Fig. 1).



Hereupon from the data acquired it was observed that all the majority of the women working in Government colleges and other organization were having the behavior head/boss biased, followed by the women working in Government schools and bank (Table 4).

Table 4 : Behavior of head/boss women as perceived by the women Employees

Sr. No.	Behavior of your Head/Boss	Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Schools	Good	6	50
		Very good	6	50
2.	Colleges	Good	6	75
		Biased	2	25
3.	Bank	Good	4	57.29
		Very good	3	42.71
4.	Other	Very good	3	100

Let’s discuss the level of problem faced by the working women regarding problem in workplace through the Table 5:

Table: 5 : Categorization of Problem for Women Employee

Sr. No.	Problem Faced in your workplace	Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Schools	Yes	9	75
		No	3	25
2.	Colleges	Yes	7	87.5
		No	1	12.5
3.	Bank	No	5	71.86
		Yes	2	28.14
4.	Other	No	3	100

Thence from the data procured it was observed that majority of the women working in Government schools and colleges were facing problems in workplace, followed by the women working in Government banks and other organizations.

Kaur *et al.* (1997) explored the social and psychological problems of female teachers working in different colleges and schools of Punjab. Using simple random sampling and a well-designed interview schedule they found that there is no considerable difference existed in psycho-social problems of women working. According to Kumari (2014) most of the women said that as working women you will definitely suffer from problems. Health related problem like physical and mental stress excessive

work load because of work pressure, family pressure etc.

Maintaining Balance in work life:

Hence, from the data possessed it was observed that all the all majority of the women in Government schools and other organization were having working feel that are unable to balance work life, followed by the women working in Government colleges and banks. Bailyn *et al.* (2001) Work and family life have always been interdependent but with more mothers getting employed, rising family hours family hours of work, service and intensive globalizing economy, and the trend toward long work hours, the interdependence has become more visible and more problem.

Here from the data obtained it was observed that in schools, colleges, banks and other organization all working women were satisfied with their jobs (Table 6).

Table 6 : Satisfaction level regarding job

Sr. No.	Satisfaction with the Job	Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
1.	Schools	Yes	12	100
2.	Colleges	Yes	8	100
3.	Bank's	Yes	7	100
4.	Other	Yes	3	100

All women working in schools, colleges, Banks and Other Organizations had no facility to work from home (Table 7).

Table 8 : Work from home facility

Sr. No.	Facility to work from home	Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Schools	No	12	100
2.	Colleges	No	8	100
3.	Banks	No	4	100
4.	Other	No	3	100

From the results obtained, following are the major challenges experienced by the women:

Challenges:

1. Women did not find enough time for themselves due to work and family life.
2. All women working in government school, colleges, bank and other organization had no facility to work from home.
3. Working women are forced to leave their small

children at home because their work.

4. Women working in school, colleges, banks and other organization accepted that they are unable to balance work and family life.

5. Female hygiene is not taken care of in the organization and proper washrooms are not available.

6. Some of the women reported that the behavior of their head/boss is not employees equal towards all the employees.

7. Working women feel they are facing more pressure and depression than non-working women.

8. Majority of the women were also facing health issues as they were not able to give enough time to physical and mental health.

9. Work related stress faced by working women.

10. Some of the women also complained about challenges regarding lack of transportation facility in the hilly regions due to which they have to leave early for work so that they can reach their workplaces on time.

Depending upon the challenges, following suggestions were given to the women so as to overcome these challenges:

Suggestions:

Lack of time:

1. Time management strategies can be applied. Division of household chores equally amongst family members and the concept of gender egalitarian roles can be taken into consideration.

2. Meal planning and menu planning can be done weekly.

3. House maid or a nanny can be kept to reduce child-rearing tasks.

Weekly meal and menu planning:

1. You can easily put ingredients together to prepare food so that it takes less time.

2. For breakfast, you can peel or chop the vegetables and keep them in the refrigerator at night. In the morning, you can also make different recipes from it.

3. Vegetables with long shelf life like peas etc. can be peeled and kept in the freezer.

4. You can make Tomato Puree and keep it.

Hygiene related Challenges:

1. Women should report about hygiene related issues to the head of the organization and a committee

can be formed who will take care of all the hygiene related issues.

2. Every organization should make sure to appoint a regular cleaner to clean the toilets on daily basis.

3. Organization should also keep a check on water supply and sanitary facilities in the washrooms. For Example, Installation of dustbins and sanitary napkin machine.

Work related stress and depression:

1. Yoga and meditation activities.

2. Positive thinking.

3. Avoid procrastination and try to finish your work/tasks on time.

Physical and mental health:

1. Work on your sleep pattern try to get at least 6-8 hours of sleep every night.

2. Eat a healthy diet to improve your mood and health.

3. Limit your screen time.

4. Indulge in an activity that reduces your stress.

Conclusion:

The results of the study concluded that working women in Government sector of Lohaghat are facing a variety of challenges and among these major problems some are as follows:

The working hours are too long. Women are generally unable to give proper and quality time to households, kids and family and all women working in school, colleges, banks and other organizations had no facility to work from home. From the data obtained it was concluded that majority of the women working in Government colleges and banks were having the lack of the time women did not enough time themselves. The data also revealed that majority of the women working in Government schools, colleges; bank and other organization were facing problems in workplace.

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