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A STUDY ON IMPACT OF NIGHT SHIFT ON WORKING WOMEN PROFESSIONALS OF IT INDUSTRY AT BENGULURU

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ABSTRACT

Women in India are regarded as one of the country's most valuable resources. Working women of India are characterized by growth and development, but they are vulnerable often by several factors which affect their health and safety. The health problems of women working in Nightshift is one of the major areas that need urgent attention from public health professionals and policymakers. Overweight and obesity, cardiovascular problems, diabetes, sleep disorders, stress, depression, anxiety, and injuries specifically affect this population and have a long lasting impact not just physical and mental health, but these women are burdened with social problems too. All of these factors have the potential to constitute a burden on Indian society in terms of morbidity, death, disability, and socioeconomic losses. Health promotion policies and programs that are focused on the women working on the night shift is critical for the country's general growth and development. The present paper involves study the consequences of night shifts and its genesis in Indian scenario and also attempted to study on the effects of night shifts on women's health. The main objective of the study is to understand working condition of women in the night shift and its impact on their health

KEY WORDS: Nightshift in Indian scenario, Nightshift on women's health, Effects of night shifts

INTRODUCTION

Night shift in Indian Scenario-An Overview

In India, labour laws come in the concurrent list of Indian Constitution. Both Indian Parliament and State Legislatures have the right to make laws. Therefore, we have in Relation to labour laws, The Factories Act, 1948 and various State Shops and Establishments Acts. The Factories Act 1948, under Section 66, banned working of women in night shifts by stating that no women shall be required or allowed to work in any factory except between the hours of 6 AM and 7 PM, provided that:

State government may make rules providing for the exemption from the restrictions to such an extent and subject to such conditions as it may prescribe, of women working in fish-curing or fish canning factories, where the employment of women beyond the hours specified in the said restrictions is necessary to prevent damage to or deterioration in any raw material. The rules made under the Sub Section (2) shall remain in force for not more than three years at a time. Women working in Hospitals & Agriculture are exempted from Factories Act, 1948 and State Shops and Establishment Acts regarding ban on nightshifts for women employees.

According to the Factories Act 1948, Factory means, any premises including the precincts (i) where ten or more workers are working, or were working on any day of the preceding twelve months, and in any part of which a manufacturing process is being carried on with the aid of power, or is ordinarily so carried on, or (ii) where twenty or more workers are working or were working on any day of the preceding twelve months, and in any part of which a manufacturing process is being carried on without the aid of power, or is ordinarily so carried on but does not include a mine subject to the operation .

Night shifts for women in India

Night shifts for women have been on discussion for a considerable time in India. In principle, women have been prohibited to work at night since The Factories Act, 1948. Yet, the issue is not devoid of controversy that at present got only reinforced by the realities of Indian export-oriented economy. Time-zones factor and pressure from the customers to keep up with fierce competition and, thus, provide for non-stop production, delivery and availability of the goods are key driving factors in the export-oriented industries. These sectors in India tend to be labour intensive and heavily rely on women workforce. For example, in fisheries and textiles, where women employees have historically constituted a significant proportion of workforce, night shifts are part and parcel of the production process. Moreover, with the soaring growth of IT and IT enabled services, mostly functioning during the night hours, the discussion of night shifts for women has come forward again as one cannot apply the blind eye to 3.2 lakhs women currently employed in IT sector.

In March 2005 an amendment in the Factories Act came into force to allow women employees in textiles and IT to work late-night shifts with employers providing adequate safeguards at workplace and while commuting. Yet, in September, 2005 Haryana government sent notices to Gurgaon-based call centres asking them not to allow women employees at night shifts on the plea that call centres are not IT (IT enabled service) companies and therefore 2000's exemptions do not apply to them.

Interestingly, the way the issue of night shifts for women is currently approached illustrates how women's rights are often handled: "the system" bans or "the system" allows. Clearly, prohibition of night work for women is discriminatory in a number of ways:

It strengthens occupational segregation by preventing women from entering the industries where night work is an essential practice.

It increases wage gap by eliminating women's access to higher paid night work hours.

It impedes women's career development as being able to work extended working hours (including night shifts) is seen by employers as an important indicator of work commitment.

Background of Night shift

Night shift is also known as Graveyard Shift in America Started in 1800 in Medical science, then by different companies to meet up the demand of clients so that they can reach the target. In the late 1990s, Fortune 500 companies in the United States began moving customer service jobs to India because of the availability of an English speaking population and lower wages than those paid to U.S. workers. Call centers fall under the umbrella of the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry in India. Estimates suggest that approximately 470,000 people work in the industry, and it is currently the fastest growing sector in the nation. Due to the time difference between India and the United States, one of the primary requirements for employment in a transnational call centre—besides fluency in English—is working the night shift. Mobility is vitally important to those who seek to work in this industry. In other words, physical mobility (getting to and from work) and temporal mobility (going out when one is expected to stay in) are job requirements. Because leaving home at night is generally considered inappropriate for and off-limits to Indian women, companies offer transportation as part of their recruitment strategy.

Such as the belief that when women are educated and earn a relatively high income, their status in a given society will be transformed for the better; and that as part of this transformation women will experience increased levels of independence and empowerment, such as substantive changes in the household (for example, men contributing equally to household labour) and the ability to come and go as they please. This has not necessarily been the case employment in this industry, particularly working at night, brings with it both new challenges and new opportunities for women workers. The notion of a woman's "place" in the urban nightscape which until now, for most women, has been characterized as "being safe at home," is transforming as a result of the night shift requirement in the BPO industry

Meaning of Night Shift

Night Shift in general is a terminology used in work environment which suggest that work needs to be done at a specific period at night. Usually night at few companies start at 6pm and 5 am, Different companies adopt different time periods within the above mentioned time frame. Generally, night shifts is adopted by companies which provide support for external clients who are always in other continents due to change in time Zones in host and third countries companies, As a result in India Many M.N.CS, T.N.CS and Global Companies adopt the policy of Night shifts so as to cop up and to fulfil their requirements such as to access information and assistance from clients. Employees who work in night shift are provided with remuneration and other facilities and along with this security to maximum extent.

Merits and Demerits Working the Night Shift

Merits

Working the Night Shift Night jobs also known as graveyard shifts are among the most difficult jobs. They pay handsomely and offer incentives. This is because a majority of employers are aware that night jobs are completely different from day jobs. Thus night jobs are well remunerated relative to day jobs.

Night jobs offer a good pay. As compared to day jobs, night shift workers earn more pay. A statistics research revealed that night jobs earn 10-20% more than day jobs. This applies to both professionals and non-professionals. Less supervision. This allows for more freedom because most bosses are not present at night. One can run errands more efficiently after work which is at morning hours. One is able to avoid queues at barber shops, banks and the like. This is because a majority of people are at work. One is able to form a strong bond with co-workers unlike a normal shift. At night there is a tendency to be less people and serenity thus workers understand each other better.

Demerits

Night jobs pose a threat to a worker's health. This is because the human brain is programmed to go to slumber at night. The adjustments made by the body might cause stress. This in turn poises the risk of heart attacks and heart diseases. They cause a diverted life. Most people prefer to work during the day. Thus one lacks adequate time for family and friends. Night jobs can lead to inadequate supply of sunlight exposure. Vitamin D from the sun helps to fight off depression.

Inter Family relations in night shifts

The human body has evolved to sleep at night and function during the day. Reversing this natural pattern can have serious physiological effects, depending on the individual. The bodily and psychological effects also can strain personal and family relationships, amplifying stress and lowering morale.

Lack of Interaction Shift workers often have difficulty maintaining functional social relationships due to schedule incompatibility. Even on their days off, shift workers might find it hard to break their atypical sleep patterns to participate in family activities, leading to feelings of isolation. When they do manage to stay awake, their energy is likely to be low.

Research shows that night shift work can lead to marital dissatisfaction, family conflict, emotional problems and lower school achievement in children. However, research also shows that some night shift workers find that their odd schedules make it easier to share child care responsibilities. They also might find it easier to participate in daytime activities, such as school and family gatherings that are unavailable to those who work regular day shifts.

The overnight shift can be a physically and emotionally demanding time of night for individuals to work, yet it has become more common in recent years. Some parents may resign themselves to working this shift, sometimes called the third shift, as a means of financially supporting their family. But this can have an effect on any children you may have as well as your relationship to them.

Third-Shift Consequences

Parents who work the overnight shift create an atypical home environment. If one parent is home with the child, that parent is likely losing interaction time with the other parent. If a single parent or both parents work an overnight shift, a babysitter is needed to stay with the child, which can cut into the family's income, reducing quality of life and increasing stress among all family members.

Struggles of Parents

The relationships of parents can affect a child as a result of the growing tension and unhappiness present in the home. This is likely to occur because of the reduced face time between the parents. In addition, according to OhioLink.edu, parents are more likely to argue over chores and other responsibilities if they do not work on the same time schedule. Children can pick up on this discontent, and it can strain their relationship with one or both parents.

Time Availability

Individuals who work the night shift often come home and sleep during the day. But children remain on a schedule of sleeping at night and being awake during the day. This creates a small window for a parent to interact with their child. A parent may often feel too busy or tried to spend time with his child in addition to fewer available hours in the day. This can reduce a child's familiarity with a parent, particularly if they are young.

Parenting Quality

According to a report published by Princeton University, the stress and fatigue of working an overnight shift can cause what is called a "spill-over effect." This effect occurs when the strains of working the third shift spill over into family relationships and parenting. Parents may take out their stress on their parents or assign unearned blame onto them, which can damage the relationship.

Deterioration of Relationship

Over time, the combination of various negative factors can seriously deteriorate the relationship between a parent and a child. Night shifts are a difficult way for any parent to support their children financially due to the ways in which the children are deprived emotionally. If working a night shift is unavoidable, being conscious of the possible risks and tendencies of a parent-child relationship undergoing this strain can help you guard against souring the relationship with child.

Night Shift in Macro Scenario

An investigation of the industrial employment of women and children in the early 1840s indicates that working conditions were often unsanitary and the work dangerous. It was the Industrial Revolution that brought women out of households into the factories and fuelled the economic necessity of both single and married women to find waged work. Women mostly found jobs in domestic services, textile factories, and piecework shops. They also worked in the coalmines. The Industrial Revolution provided independent wages, mobility and a better standard of living. For the majority, however, factory work in the early years of the 19th century resulted in a life of hardship. The question of whether nightshifts for women should be banned has been debated upon for over a

hundred years. The discussions within International Labour Organization have reflected this debate. The working class in Europe first raised the demand for prohibition of night work by women. Some industrialized countries in Europe enacted legislation in the early years of the twentieth century prohibiting Women from working at night. This was followed by demands for international prohibition of night work for women so as to equalize the costs of production and make uniform the conditions of industrial competition between states by inducing those states, which had not already prohibited night work for women to enact legislation to this effect. In order to ensure that such a ban did not place employers at a disadvantage, Government negotiated international treaties for a simultaneous ban on the night work for women. In 1919, the ILO decided to completely prohibit night work for women in Public and Private Industry. However, the Convention stated that the night work should be permitted in case of, force majeure, when in any undertaking there occurs an interruption of work which was impossible to foresee and which is not of a recurring nature or in case where the work has to do with raw materials or materials in the course of treatment, which are subject to rapid deterioration, when such night work is necessary to preserve such materials from certain losses. This convention made it clear that women could be allowed to work at night in the greater national interest or in the economic interests of preventing loss of raw materials. To encourage greater number of countries to ratify the ILO Convention concerning the women non-employment in the nightshifts, the Convention was further made flexible as women holding responsible position of management, who were not ordinarily engaged in manual work, were exempted from provisions of ILO Convention. Subsequently women in higher posts of a managerial or technical character were exempted from its provision as also women employed in health and welfare services The Convention concerning night works for women employed in industry adopted in 1948 defined night hours in such a manner as to allow longer hours of work for women and provided sufficient flexibility to industry to permit a double shift system of work. The revised Convention of 1948 further permitted the ban on night work to be suspended by the government in the national interest, i.e., in case of serious Emergency only after consultations with the employers and worker's organizations concerned. The General Conference of ILO in June 1990 had adopted a protocol known as Protocol of 1990 under those provisions the competent authority in a country under its national laws and regulations is authorized to rectify the duration of the nightshifts or to introduce exemptions from ban on night works for women for certain branches of activity or occupations.

The Protocol adopted in 1990 to the night work (women) Convention (revised) stated that above-mentioned variations or exemptions could not apply to women workers during a period of at least 16 weeks, before or after child birth of which at least eight Weeks should be before the expected date of child birth. The prohibition of night work by women shall apply to additional periods if medical certificate is produced stating that this is necessary for the health of mother or child. It further stipulates that a women worker should not be dismissed or given notice of dismissal because of pregnancy or childbirth only. The Conventions, which were adopted by ILO in 1990, stated that workers of both sexes who perform a certain number of hours of nightshift are to be provided with sufficient rest periods, health assessment, and medical advice and safety measures. It will not be applicable to those persons, who are employed in agriculture, stock raising, fishing, maritime transport and inland navigation. In case of women workers, the Convention requires that alternate works be made available before and after childbirth and if necessary, during pregnancy and a prolonged period after childbirth.

During these periods women shall not be dismissed or given notice of dismissal, except for justifiable reasons not connected with pregnancy or childbirth. The Court of Justice of European community states that the protective rule banning nightshift work for women should be restricted to cases of pregnancy and maternity only and a blanket ban on nightshifts for women was completely in violation of Council Directive of equal treatment to men and women with regard to access in employment, vocational training, promotion and work conditions.

Night Shift in Micro Scenario

Night shifts in India are that five years back call centers in India were mere means of cost cutting for giant companies. Only few jobs were outsourced but now BPO's are emerging as an effective tool. Presently the focus is shifting from non-core aspect of the business to areas of specialization. As outsourcing became important, it needed to be done in lowest minimum cost. India is one of the most preferred destinations by international

business in the West. India in the recent years has shown huge developments in the areas of communication, power and software developments. India exports software to 95 different countries and stands second in the world as far as software exports are concerned. In addition, India has ISO 9000 and others software firms that have a reputation of providing quality services. India stands out of the rest in terms of better IT and technological infrastructure, low cost, skilled manpower that is readily available, friendly taxation and other laws, a stable government, a fast paced economy and quality certified software firms.

BPO, boom has provided jobs to thousands of college students and graduates, who previously would have found it difficult to get employment. But apart from this, it has poised a challenge to challenge our own cultural values such as the patriarchal family, and taboos such as premarital sex. The work culture followed in BPO is different and less hierarchical. The exposure to such a work culture is leading employees to challenge hierarchies at home and in society. Now that they have independent incomes, they feel more confident to challenge traditional values and customs. Live-in relationships and casual sex among call centre employees are on the increase, as are alcoholism and drug abuse. The problems people are getting financial independence at an age when they don't have the maturity to handle it. Most of the work at call centre's and BPO operations is at night, because they have to interact with U.S or Britain natives and there time varies from Indian time zone, so employees tend to lose touch with their family, friends, and neighbours, whose waking hours are different. —You start hanging out with a different set of people with whom you don't really have very deep ties. The person is no longer a vibrant and active part of a family or neighbourhood. Financially independent children now want their parents to treat them as equals. Parents have to redefine their roles, or lose their positions altogether. Parental authority is already weakened, and the more parents try to assert their authority, the more likely it will be completely broken. So it's who? We have decided which way to lead our life. Though there are so many ill effects of booming BPO on our socio cultural life but one thing is a fact that it's has generated a tremendous amount of opportunity to earn and be employed.

EFFECTS OF NIGHT SHIFTS ON WOMEN

In Addition, the younger the age of spouses, the lower their education, and the larger the number of children, the higher the percentage working nonstandard schedules. In 27% of married couples, the wife is full-time employed on non-standard schedule and the couple has at least one child under 14 (Presser, 2003, p. 70). Thus, there is a reasonable probability that employees working standard schedules will be married to spouses working nonstandard shifts and that they may experience negative outcomes not as a result of their own work schedules, but as a result of their spouses' work schedules. Presser (2003) suggests that in the absence of children, shift-working couples can cope with whatever stress such schedules generate. But when couple have children, shift work schedules complicate family life considerably, increasing the risk of such negative outcomes as work-family conflict (see also Staines & Pleck, 1983). There is growing consensus that parents' daily work experiences have an impact on family functioning (e.g., Crouter, Bumpus, Maguire, & McHale, 1999; Parcel & Menaghan, 1994; Repetti, 1989, 1994). Consistent with both Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory and with family-systems theory (see Cox & Paley, 1997, for a review) and the notion of spill over, stressful job conditions have been associated with such distribution. © 2008 SAGE Publications. All rights reserved. Not for commercial use or unauthorized negative outcomes for the family as more frequent marital conflict (Bolger, DeLongis, Kessler, & Wethington, 1989; Schulz, Cowan, Cowan, & Brennan, 2004). Building on Bronfenbrenner's observation that "In ecological research, the principal main effects are likely to be interactions" (1979, p. 38), we hypothesize that the combination of mothers' evening shift schedules and long work hours may be one such stressful job condition. Families in which the mother regularly works evening shifts compared to day shifts face many special challenges. For example, the family as a whole is not typically together during dinner, nor are they all together for afternoon or evening social events such as school performances that occur on workdays (Staines & Pleck, 1984). In addition, many husbands in these families assume primary responsibility for preparing dinner for their children as well as themselves and for supervising homework for school age children. If their children are young, fathers will also supervise their bedtime preparations. Some men may find these activities especially stressful

Or undesirable, increasing the likelihood of negative outcomes. Being away from the family during after-school and traditional “family” times is thought to be stressful for mothers, especially those mothers who work long hours; that is, the more time away from the family during these hours, the more conflict and distress mothers will experience. Finally, full appreciation of the effects of wives’ shift schedules on outcomes requires the acknowledgment that most employees function with India yards. In other words, to fully understand the effects of shift work, outcomes need to be assessed for both the employee and the spouse, and outcomes should be analysed within couples. Our focus on the couple as the Unit of analysis builds on a rich empirical literature reflecting the reality that the lives of partners in couples are linked; what happens to one member of a dyad affects the other member (e.g., Barnett, Marshall, Raudenbush, & Brennan, 1993; Chesley & Moen, 2006). The use of couple data also permits analyses of within-couple crossover effects (e.g., her work hours may affect his outcomes and vice versa). In the first systematic longitudinal

Analysis of the separate effects of work hours and income on physical health, Stolzenberg (2001) found that within couples, the monetary benefits of husbands’ employment affected wives’ health over a 3-year period, whereas the nonmonetary aspects of wives’ employment affected husbands’ health over the same period.

DISCUSSION

In this study we came across that in Night shift many females are working in shifts are between 21-30 years. Many females in night shift are graduates and post graduates so they are able to handle any responsibility. Majority women are un married so they have few bonds to family responsibility. Night shifts considered as risky but also female earns bread from it and go hand in hand with male and support family, many female feels unsecured to work during night shifts. Duration of night shift in many Organisation is less than 8 hours Majority female work in night shift due to demand pertain to nature of job. The transport facility provided by the company for female is not up to the mark. Due to night shifts many female working under this shift have health problem. They faced health issues like Backaches, depression, continual tiredness frequents cold and headache Digestive Disorder, High blood pressure. Majority companies won’t provide any training to their female employee regarding health. In majority company’s female employee faces mental harassment at night shift. Females working in night shift felt that they are able to contact their family only if there is any need. Females working in night shift have to come across problems with family and social responsibility Working environment for female at night is average. With regard to safety females feels that company failed in providing better safety facilities to them. In spite of draw backs pertain with night shift many female employees feel they can create a strong bond in night shifts rather than in normal shifts. The study found that many factors affected on social, physical and mental health of working women. Attractive salary, travel facility, medical facility, incentives, insurance policies, etc., were motivated them to work on shift timings. Working women felt they are facing more mental pressure and depression, which affect on their social life. Employees have been socially alienated in the family. Women were forced to leave their small children at home because of their work which resulted in lack of proper care, support and love for them. Productivity and work performance also have affected due to their work schedule. Majority of the respondents have faced various health problems like obesity, eye irritation, irregular menstrual cycle, etc. Shift timings affect on dietary pattern, mental stress, sleep disturbances

CONCLUSIONS

The present review, though limited in nature highlights that even in this era, many Indian women struggle to get into night shift work and when they are into it, there is a significant proportion of women who face health and social problems that in turn affect their growth and development. If proper measures are not taken, then the problem is likely to increase in the coming years. The public health community should identify, prepare, integrate and implement activities that help the promotion of health and lifestyle of these working women. There is need of good quality population data which can drive policies and programs for women working in night shift in every sector of India. This doesn't end here, it should be monitored and evaluated for its effectiveness and efficacy using the intersectoral approach. Rather than viewing this either as a site of western imperialism or a space that liberates women from traditional gender roles, one should begin to see that it has the potential to reshape the individual

perception and community that surrounds them. Safety of women remains the main challenge, problems at any level should not be ignored and change in the attitude of society for allowing women to work at night should be put light on Women have now taken great strides to walk alongside men, in the corporate world. They have become more conscious about their individuality and independence. Tremendous opportunities exist for women in nightshifts, as it offers both a better pay package and security. But the state of safety and security is not the same amongst all the sectors. Comparing the sectors, it was found that BPO conforms the maximum satisfaction to women, in security aspects BPO sector has been observed as the more promising sector for women in the nightshift.

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