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A Study On Promoting Women's Health And Wellbeing In The Hotel Industry And Its Impact

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Abstract: This research looks at the role of women working in the hotel industry and how it affects different aspects of their well-being—physical, mental, emotional, social, economic, occupational, and environmental. Using a qualitative approach supported by an in-depth review of existing studies and publications, the paper highlights the main difficulties women face, including long and irregular working hours, high job-related stress, and a lack of adequate support systems. The study emphasizes the need for meaningful changes within the industry to create a healthier and more supportive environment. Suggested measures include flexible work schedules, access to mentorship opportunities, and dedicated health and wellness programs. These steps can not only improve women's job satisfaction and work-life balance but also benefit the industry through lower turnover rates and better service quality. What makes this study unique is its comprehensive view of women's participation in hospitality, offering both practical solutions and fresh insights to support their personal and professional growth.

Index Terms: wellbeing, women, hotel industry, stress, health.

Introduction: Wellbeing

In the context of the hotel industry, "well-being" refers to the holistic state of health and satisfaction that encompasses various aspects of an individual's life. This includes physical, mental, emotional, social, economic, occupational, and environmental dimensions. Each of these elements plays a critical role in ensuring that women in the hotel industry can lead fulfilling and balanced lives while contributing effectively to their workplaces.

Well-being is a positive state that individuals and societies experience, like health, and is influenced by social, economic, and environmental conditions. It includes quality of life and the ability to contribute meaningfully to society. Promoting well-being helps ensure fair resource distribution, thriving communities, and sustainability. A society's well-being is reflected in its resilience, capacity for action, and ability to overcome challenges.

The World Health Organization (WHO) collaborates with countries and partners to promote well-being in relation to global health and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Well-being drives policy coherence across sectors and promotes collective action, helping communities become active, resilient, and sustainable. This is crucial for addressing health threats like COVID-19 and environmental disasters. The well-being of employees is a crucial aspect that influences the overall productivity and sustainability of any industry. (Sirgy, 2021) Like health, well-being is a positive state experienced by individuals and societies, determined by social, economic, and environmental conditions. It encompasses the quality of life and the ability of people to contribute to the world with a sense of meaning and purpose. In the hotel industry, which is known for its demanding work environment and high levels of stress, promoting the well-being of employees, particularly women, is of paramount importance.

Women in the hotel industry often face unique challenges, including work-related stress, gender discrimination, and the pressure of balancing professional and domestic responsibilities. These factors can significantly impact their physical and mental health. The importance of addressing these issues is underscored by the findings of various studies. **Preethi R.V. et.al (2020)** A study on the stress management and health impacts on women employees in the IT sector in Chennai highlighted that women experience significant stress due to professional and family factors, emphasizing the need for companies to provide stress management resources and support systems.

Moreover, the influence of well-being on psychological empowerment is notable. **Vishal Yadav.et.al (2023)** Research has shown that employee well-being positively affects empowerment, with happiness acting as a significant mediator. This relationship suggests that enhancing well-being can lead to greater empowerment and job satisfaction, which is essential for fostering a productive and motivated workforce in the hotel industry.

In the broader context of workplace health promotion (WHP), studies have demonstrated the benefits of health awareness and wellness programs. For example, research in Malaysia's electronics sector revealed that workplace health promotion programs significantly improve employee participation, knowledge, and overall well-being. Similarly, the hospitality industry can benefit from such initiatives by implementing comprehensive WHP programs tailored to the needs of women employees.

The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasizes the importance of well-being in global health and sustainable development. The Geneva Charter for Well-being, endorsed at the 10th Global Conference on Health Promotion, outlines key actions such as designing equitable economies, creating public policies for the common good, achieving universal health coverage, and valuing the planet. These principles can guide the development of strategies to enhance women's health and well-being in the hotel industry.

Promoting women's health and well-being in the hotel industry is not only a noble goal but also a strategic approach to achieving a resilient and sustainable workforce. By addressing the unique challenges faced by women and implementing targeted wellness programs, the industry can improve employee satisfaction, reduce turnover, and enhance overall productivity. This paper aims to explore the various factors affecting women's health and well-being in the hotel industry and propose actionable strategies to promote a healthier and more equitable work environment.

In defining human well-being, Diener (1984) identified three primary hallmarks: (1) well-being is subjective, (2) well-being can be measured by positive factors, and (3) the measurement of well-being is a global assessment encompassing all aspects of life. First, the subjectivity of well-being means that different individuals may define and evaluate well-being differently. This variability poses a challenge in measuring well-being for larger groups, such as departments, companies, organizations, or nations, through objective indicators like income, marital status, or education.

Second, well-being reflects the general extent of various positive emotional factors, implying that negativity is not considered in evaluating well-being levels. This perspective was integral to the development of the Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI) (**Hills & Argyle, 2002**) where items are rated from zero to a positive level. For instance, the CHI includes incremental statements like "I get by in life" (0 points) to "I love life" (3 points) (**Lu, 1996**).

Third, well-being is generally conceptualized and measured as an overall assessment of all aspects of one's life. Some researchers have attempted to develop multi-dimensional well-being scales (Chaaban et al., 2016) or scales specific to certain life aspects (**Van Katwyk et al., 2000**). The Composite Global Well-Being Index (CGWBI) by Chaaban et al. (2016) is an example of a scale with ten well-being dimensions. Another example is the Job-Related Affective Well-Being Scale (JAWS) by **Van Katwyk et al. (2000)**, which assesses well-being related to job experiences. Recent hospitality studies have also focused on specific well-being aspects, such as work/home well-being (**Wang et al., 2021**), social well-being (Altinay et al., 2019), and spiritual well-being (Biswakarma, 2018).

Overall, the authors emphasize the complexity and multi-dimensional nature of well-being, highlighting the need for subjective, positive, and comprehensive approaches to measure and understand well-being across different contexts and populations.

Primary challenges and stressors faced by women

Work-Life Balance

Women in the hotel industry often grapple with achieving a balance between their professional and personal lives due to long and irregular working hours. (**Kim, et.al.2016**) The industry's demand for high customer satisfaction necessitates extended and sometimes unpredictable shifts, which can intrude on personal time and family responsibilities. The expectation of overtime work exacerbates this issue, making it difficult for

women to manage their household duties and personal well-being, ultimately leading to significant stress and burnout.

Job-Related Stress

The hotel industry is characterized by high customer expectations and physically demanding tasks, both of which contribute to job-related stress. **Mahlaga Darvishmotevali (2020)** stated job insecurity which results in performance decreasing their subjective wellbeing. Women working in roles such as housekeeping, front desk management, and food service are frequently under pressure to maintain high standards of service. This constant demand for perfection, coupled with the physical strain of the job, can result in fatigue, health issues, and a heightened sense of stress.

Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination remains a pervasive issue in the hotel industry. Women often encounter wage disparities, earning less than their male counterparts for similar roles. This financial inequity leads to job dissatisfaction and economic stress. Additionally, gender bias can hinder career advancement opportunities for women, limiting their professional growth. Many women also face sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination from colleagues and superiors, creating a hostile and stressful work environment.

Health Concerns

The physical demands of jobs in the hotel industry, such as lifting heavy objects, standing for long periods, and repetitive motions, can lead to various health problems, including musculoskeletal issues and chronic fatigue. Moreover, the stress from meeting job demands and dealing with workplace discrimination can contribute to mental health issues like anxiety, depression, and burnout. These health concerns not only affect women's quality of life but also their productivity and job satisfaction.

Marital and Family Responsibilities

Balancing marital and family responsibilities with work is a significant challenge for many women in the hotel industry. Married women and those with children often face the dual burden of managing household duties and professional responsibilities, leading to increased stress levels. **Jackwon Ko (2013)** Finding reliable childcare, especially for those working irregular hours, is another major concern. Additionally, women at different stages of pregnancy encounter unique challenges, including concerns about job security, health, and managing work alongside family responsibilities.

Societal Expectations

Societal expectations and traditional gender roles place additional pressure on women in the hotel industry. In many cultures, women are expected to fulfill primary caregiving roles and manage household chores, even when they are employed full-time. These entrenched gender roles can make it difficult for women to pursue career advancement and professional development, adding to their stress and limiting their opportunities for growth.

Financial Stress

Financial stress is a common issue for women in the hotel industry, particularly due to wage disparities and the economic pressures of raising a family. Earning less than their male counterparts while managing the financial demands of household and childcare expenses can be overwhelming. This financial strain adds another layer of stress, affecting both their personal and professional lives.

Support Systems

A lack of adequate support systems is a significant challenge for women in the hotel industry. Many women do not have access to essential resources such as mentorship programs, counseling services, and health and wellness programs. Additionally, insufficient workplace policies regarding flexible work arrangements, maternity leave, and anti-discrimination measures exacerbate the challenges faced by women. The absence of these support systems and policies makes it difficult for women to manage their stress and maintain their well-being.

How can wellbeing be promoted?

Flexible Work Policies helps in promoting the health and well-being of women in the hotel industry requires a comprehensive approach that combines policies, programs, and cultural changes designed to support their physical, mental, and emotional health. (ILO, 2014d). Flexible work policies are essential, including flexible work hours, comprehensive parental leave, and job sharing, which can help women balance their professional and personal responsibilities, especially during critical periods such as pregnancy

Supportive Workplace Environment Creating a supportive workplace environment is also crucial. This can be achieved by offering childcare support through on-site facilities or subsidies, implementing health and wellness programs like fitness classes and stress management workshops, and providing access to counseling and psychological services to support mental health. Furthermore, career development and

advancement opportunities are vital for women's professional growth. Establishing mentorship programs, offering continuous professional development through training and workshops, and ensuring equal opportunities for promotions can help women achieve their career goals without facing discrimination or bias.

Anti-discrimination policies play a significant role in creating a safe and inclusive work environment. Strict anti-harassment policies, regular diversity and inclusion training, and anonymous reporting systems for harassment and discrimination can encourage women to report incidents without fear of retaliation. Additionally, organizational support for work-life balance initiatives, adherence to high health and safety standards, and providing ergonomic workspaces can contribute to better physical health and reduce stress. **Advocacy and community** engagement are also important. Supporting the formation of employee resource groups focused on women's issues, partnering with local organizations and advocacy groups, and **Hyeli Kim.et.al (2018)** stated engaging in corporate social responsibility activities that support women's health and education can enhance the support network available to women employees.

Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are necessary to ensure the effectiveness of these initiatives. Regular surveys and feedback from women employees can identify areas of improvement, while tracking health and well-being metrics can provide insights into the impact of various programs. Transparent reporting on progress and challenges related to women's health and well-being initiatives can build trust and accountability within the organization.

By implementing these strategies, the hotel industry can foster a supportive environment that promotes the health and well-being of women employees, leading to higher job satisfaction, reduced turnover, and improved overall productivity.

Review Of Literature:

Chawla et.al (2019) The study examines the impact of psychological capital and perceived gender equity on employee well-being, focusing on women, and explores the mediating role of commitment and the moderating role of social support. Findings indicate that perceived gender equity significantly enhances well-being, particularly for women, suggesting that organizations can improve well-being through training and equitable policies.

Doherty (2004) This action research in the UK hospitality industry examines the effectiveness of work-life balance initiatives in helping women advance to senior management, highlighting long working hours as a key barrier. It argues that both diversity management and equal opportunities approaches are insufficient, advocating for stronger employee rights and engagement with male managers to improve workplace conditions for all.

Anne hill.et.al (2010). This paper reviews global evidence showing persistent gender gaps in school enrollment and literacy, particularly in the developing world, and highlights the broad social and economic benefits of educating women. Despite progress, the gender gap remains, and improving women's education is crucial for enhancing productivity, family health, child survival, and overall economic development.

Agarwal (2015) This paper examines the well-being of female workers and its relationship with organizational and extra-organizational factors by reviewing literature on the 'what', 'why', and 'how' of employee well-being. It highlights the complexity of gender differences in the workplace and suggests further research on individual, social, family, and work-related variables affecting well-being, noting consistent and inconsistent findings across various factors.

Pandita.et.al (2024) This study examines the impact of job-related stress on the well-being of women in the IT industry, considering demographic factors such as age, experience, and marital status. It explores how occupational stress affects mental health outcomes like anxiety, depression, and burnout, highlighting the role of societal norms and gender roles within the sociocultural context of the IT sector. **Preethi R.V. et.al (2020)** Stated that women in the IT sector experience significant stress due to professional and family factors such as relocation, uncertainty, and financial concerns. Effective stress management is crucial for maintaining a work-life balance. Companies should provide relaxation techniques, counseling, and career development opportunities, while a comprehensive health program for women is needed to address their unique health challenges and promote positive outcomes. Stress affects individuals at all levels, necessitating a positive attitude and support systems.

Yadav.et.al (2023) This study found that working women experience higher perceived stress than homemakers, though both groups report similar levels of psychological well-being. There is a significant negative correlation between perceived stress and psychological well-being, indicating that improving psychological well-being can reduce stress. The findings support the need for targeted mental health programs and training for working women in Jammu.

O. Neill.et.al (2010) This study explored employee stress in the hospitality industry by interviewing 164 managerial and hourly workers from 65 hotels over eight days. The main stressors identified were interpersonal tensions and overloads. Managers reported more stressors than hourly employees, but no significant differences were found by gender or marital status. Stressors were associated with negative physical health symptoms, lower job satisfaction, and higher turnover intentions.

Rabindra Kumar et.al (2017) This study investigated the impact of employee well-being on psychological empowerment and found that well-being positively influences empowerment, with happiness mediating this relationship. Data from 96 executives in the Indian service sector highlighted the need for organizational strategies to enhance employee well-being for greater empowerment.

Hui Nee (2011) The study surveyed workers in Malaysia's electronics sector on workplace health promotion (WHP). Findings indicate a need for better management commitment, employee involvement, and training to improve WHP programs. Recommendations are provided to enhance workplace health and achieve a sustainable working environment.

Objective Of the Study:

- To identify the primary challenges faced by women.
- To assess the impact of their participation on their personal life and overall industry.
- To provide recommendations for improving women's wellbeing in the hotel industry

Findings:

The research identified several primary challenges and stressors faced by women in the hotel industry, impacting their health and well-being. These challenges included work-life balance issues, particularly for married women and those with children, who often struggle to manage their professional responsibilities alongside personal and familial duties. Pregnant women and new mothers faced additional stressors due to inadequate parental leave policies and a lack of flexible working arrangements, leading to higher stress levels and potential mental health issues.

The study also highlighted that women in the hotel industry frequently encounter workplace discrimination and harassment, contributing to a hostile work environment. Limited career advancement opportunities and unequal pay further exacerbated stress, impacting on their overall job satisfaction and well-being. The demanding nature of the hospitality industry, characterized by long hours, shift work, and high customer service expectations, was found to contribute significantly to physical and mental fatigue among women employees.

The implementation of supportive policies and programs was identified as a critical factor in promoting women's health and well-being. Flexible work arrangements, comprehensive health and wellness programs, access to childcare, and strong anti-discrimination policies were found to be effective in mitigating these challenges. Mentorship programs and career development opportunities were also crucial in fostering a supportive and inclusive workplace culture.

Conclusion

The findings of this research underscore the significant challenges faced by women in the hotel industry, which adversely impact their health and well-being. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that includes flexible work policies, comprehensive health and wellness programs, and robust anti-discrimination measures. By creating a supportive and inclusive work environment, the hotel industry can not only enhance the well-being of its women employees but also improve job satisfaction, reduce turnover rates, and boost overall productivity.

The study concludes that promoting women's health and well-being in the hotel industry is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic business decision. Companies that invest in the well-being of their women employees are likely to see positive outcomes in terms of employee loyalty, enhanced performance, and a stronger organizational reputation. Which in result also help in Viksit Bharat, research should focus on the long-term impact of these interventions and explore additional strategies to support women's health and well-being in the hospitality sector.

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