

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES OF HOTEL INDUSTRY IN MANAGING STRESS FOR WORK LIFE BALANCE

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Abstract

The study encapsulates a comprehensive exploration of the unique challenges faced by women working in the hotel industry. In the contemporary workplace, achieving a balance between professional responsibilities and personal life is a critical concern, particularly for female employees who encounter distinctive stressors. This review delves into the multifaceted nature of challenges confronted by female professionals within the hotel sector, analysing the interplay of workplace demands, societal expectations, and personal responsibilities. The paper underscores the significance of understanding and addressing these challenges for the holistic well-being of female employees, contributing to a more inclusive and supportive work environment. By synthesizing existing literature and empirical findings, the review aims to shed light on potential interventions and strategies that can be implemented to alleviate stress and facilitate improved work-life balance for female employees in the hotel industry. The insights garnered from this review contribute to the broader discourse on gender dynamics, stress management, and work-life balance, providing a valuable resource for both researchers and practitioners in the hospitality sector.

Keywords: Female Employees, Hotel Industry, Work-Life Balance, Stress Management, Gender Disparities.

1: Introduction

The hospitality and hotel industry play a pivotal role in the global economy, serving as a cornerstone for tourism and business travel. Within this dynamic sector, the contributions of female employees are increasingly significant, as they actively participate in various roles and responsibilities. This study delves into the unique experiences and challenges faced by female employees in the hotel industry, shedding light on their professional journey, the evolving landscape of gender dynamics, and the ongoing efforts towards fostering inclusivity and equality within this vibrant and diverse workplace. Understanding the nuanced perspectives of female employees in the hotel industry is essential for cultivating a supportive and equitable work environment that maximizes their potential and ensures a thriving and balanced workforce.

Women's place in hospitality

Companies now have a better grasp of why it's crucial to invest in female workers. Organizations are actively seeking to increase the representation of women at all levels of the organization due to the belief that women with strong interpersonal skills make excellent managers. One of the most important aspects of people management, according to them, is intuition, and women also have a greater emotional quotient than males. In today's hotel business, women now play a crucial role. They are challenging traditional gender norms and establishing themselves as powerful figures in the hospitality sector. Without the warm smiles and endearing personalities of the ladies, the whole hospitality experience would paint a quite bleak image. Not just in India, but all throughout the globe, a woman has shown herself to be an exceptional hostess. Women provide an air of sophistication and elegance to the hospitality sector just by being there. The fact that women are now seen as having more value and potential in the business world is so undeniable. [1]

1.1: Problems and Challenges of Female Employees of Hotel Industry

The female employees in the hotel industry encounter a range of problems and challenges, reflecting broader issues within the workplace. Some of the key challenges include: [2]

Gender Discrimination: Female employees often face discrimination based on their gender, impacting their career progression, access to promotions, and overall professional growth.

Unequal Pay and Benefits: Disparities in wages and benefits between male and female employees persist in the hotel industry, contributing to economic inequality.

Limited Leadership Opportunities: Women may encounter barriers when seeking leadership positions, with limited representation in upper management and executive roles within the industry.

Work-Life Balance Struggles: The demanding nature of hotel industry jobs, particularly in customer-facing roles, can pose challenges for female employees in maintaining a healthy work-life balance. **Sexual Harassment:** Instances of sexual harassment are reported by female employees, highlighting the need for robust policies and mechanisms to address and prevent such behaviors within the workplace.

Lack of Flexible Working Arrangements: The hotel industry traditionally follows rigid working hours, which may not accommodate the diverse needs of female employees, especially those with family responsibilities.

Limited Access to Training and Development: Female employees may face obstacles in accessing professional development opportunities, hindering their ability to enhance skills and advance in their careers.

Stereotyping and Prejudice: Preconceived notions and stereotypes about gender roles may persist in the workplace, impacting how female employees are perceived and treated by colleagues and superiors.

Uniform Policies and Appearance Standards: Some female employees may experience discomfort or dissatisfaction with uniform and appearance standards that can be more stringent for women than for men in certain hotel roles.

Insufficient Support Systems: Inadequate support systems, including mentorship programs and employee assistance programs, may hinder female employees in navigating the challenges they face.

Fostering an inclusive and fair workplace within the hotel industry is vital for the well-being and professional growth of female workers. Understanding and tackling these difficulties and obstacles is a must.

1.2: Stress of Female Employees of Hotel Industry

Working in the hospitality sector may be very exhausting due to the following factors: long hours, tight deadlines, unexpected guest encounters, heavy workload, antisocial working hours, repetitive tasks with frequent rotations, and demanding customers. [3]

Female employees in the hotel industry may experience various stresses associated with the nature of their work environment. Some common stressors include:

High Workload: The hotel industry often demands long and irregular working hours, especially in customer-facing roles, leading to fatigue and burnout.

Customer Service Pressures: Dealing with diverse customer needs, complaints, and challenging situations can contribute to stress, particularly in roles such as front desk, concierge, or guest services.

Shift Work and Schedule Variability: The requirement for shift work, including night shifts and weekends, can disrupt regular sleep patterns and family life, leading to increased stress levels.

Time Constraints: Time-sensitive tasks and the need to meet tight deadlines, such as preparing rooms for guests or managing event schedules, can create stress for female employees.

Limited Career Advancement Opportunities: Some women in the hotel industry may perceive limited opportunities for career growth and advancement, contributing to job dissatisfaction and stress.

Work-Life Imbalance: Balancing work responsibilities with personal and family commitments can be challenging, especially when faced with inflexible schedules and demanding workloads.

Uniform and Grooming Standards: Strict uniform and grooming standards in certain hotel roles may contribute to body image concerns and stress among female employees.

Sexual Harassment: Instances of sexual harassment in the workplace can create a hostile environment, leading to stress and anxiety for female employees.

Job Insecurity: Temporary or seasonal employment arrangements prevalent in the hotel industry can contribute to job insecurity and financial stress.

Limited Training and Development Opportunities: Insufficient access to training and professional development opportunities may hinder career growth and contribute to feelings of stagnation.

1.3: Work-life balance issues

Female employees in the hotel industry encounter distinct challenges when it comes to maintaining a healthy work-life balance. The nature of their roles, often characterized by irregular working hours, customer service pressures, and demanding responsibilities, poses hurdles that impact personal well-being. Juggling shift work, meeting high performance standards, and adhering to appearance expectations contribute to the complexity of work-life integration. Limited flexibility in schedules, coupled with a lack of family-friendly policies, amplifies the struggle for female hotel employees to allocate time for personal and familial commitments. These challenges underscore the need for industry-wide initiatives and organizational policies that prioritize work-life balance, flexibility, and

support systems, acknowledging the unique circumstances faced by female employees in the dynamic environment of the hotel industry. [4]

2: OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To study the specific stress factors affecting female employees in the hotel industry and their impact on overall well-being.
2. To study the challenges faced by female hotel employees in achieving a harmonious work-life balance.
3. To study the gender-specific issues and societal expectations that contribute to stress among female hotel industry workers.
4. To study the effectiveness of current coping mechanisms utilized by female hotel employees to manage stress and maintain work-life balance.

3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Following are the research questions for this study:

1. What are the specific stress factors experienced by female employees in the hotel industry, and how do these factors impact their overall well-being?
2. What challenges do female hotel employees encounter in their efforts to achieve a harmonious work-life balance, considering the nature of their work and personal life obligations?
3. How do gender-specific issues and societal expectations contribute to stress among female workers in the hotel industry, and what are the key manifestations of these challenges?
4. What coping mechanisms are currently utilized by female hotel employees to manage stress, and how effective are these strategies in maintaining a healthy work-life balance?

4: LITERATURE REVIEWS

Maintaining a healthy work-life balance impacts both the company's production and the employees' quality of life. There may be a scarcity of employees, particularly women—who currently make up nearly half of the hotel industry's managerial and staffing positions—because of the

service-centric character of the industry, which experiences high and low seasons annually and has a direct influence on the personal lives of manpower. The alarm of "Work-Life-Balance" goes out, especially for women in the workforce, whose responsibilities extend beyond the office due to factors such as extended working hours or night shifts, heavy workloads, and so on. Secondary sources, including articles published recently on the topic of work-life balance in the hotel business and the unique contributions of women in this field, formed the basis of this study. [5]

Employee performance, engagement in the workforce, and retention might all benefit from a more positive work-life balance for women in the hotel business. There should be a strong push for hospitality firms to recognize the challenges that female workers have on the job and provide support for them. The retention and advancement of female workers may be achieved via the implementation of effective strategies to foster a female-oriented company culture. Incorporating flexible work rules and child care policies into the organization's overall strategy plan is crucial for female workers. For human resources policies to remain competitive and keep women in the field after marriage, they must be on par with those of other sectors. One way to assist workers deal with stress and juggle various responsibilities is to provide them with high-quality training. Programs to control stress, trainings to improve time management skills, and counseling sessions may cause significant discomfort among workers. [6]

A lot of people know that the hospitality industry, which includes high-end hotels and restaurants, is notorious for its high employee stress levels. This is mainly because of the long shifts, unfriendly working hours, lack of job security, and constant mismatch between employee needs and available work hours. Restaurant and hotel managers often experience anxiety because they are understaffed during peak hours while trying to maintain a high profit margin. This is a common problem in the hospitality industry as a whole. Hotel management and personnel have seen the pressure as detrimental to their financial well-being due to excessive delays in meal service and poor food quality. Because of the nature of the job and the environment at hotels and restaurants, employees often struggle to maintain a healthy work-life balance (WLB), which may have a negative impact on their productivity and happiness on the job. The primary goal of this research is to better understand how hotel and restaurant workers manage their professional and personal lives, and other goals include identifying and addressing the causes of stress in this business. [7]

There is a distinct and complicated set of issues surrounding the representation of women in the hospitality industry. The specifics of the hospitality sector make it more difficult for women to advance in their careers, as is readily apparent. Long hours, unpredictable shifts, and balancing work and family responsibilities are just a few of the many obstacles that women workers face, particularly in the hospitality sector. The problems faced by women in the workforce and by women in management positions in the hotel industry are brought to light in a comprehensive literature review. Consequently, the purpose of this research is to investigate the challenges faced by female workers in the hospitality sector. In addition, the study details a number of steps that the hospitality sector may take to lessen the impact of work-family conflicts. Additional areas for further study are also highlighted. [8]

There are a lot of women working in the hotel sector. One of the biggest problems that women have while trying to commit to their organizations is work-life conflict. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to examine the connection between women's work-life balance and their organizational commitment. Our focus is on women in the hotel sector and how they manage their work and personal lives. We also look at how their organizational commitment changes depending on the amount of work-life balance they experience. The next step is to determine whether there is a correlation between the sociodemographic features of women and their work-life balance and organizational commitment (i.e., "age, education, working years, and position level"). Information was gathered from 525 female workers in China. To find out how work-life balance relates to organizational commitment, researchers used multiple linear regression analyses. There was a statistically significant relationship between work-life balance and loyalty to the company. The sociodemographic features of women, work-life balance, and organizational commitment were all significantly correlated. [9]

The role of women in business has grown in recent years, and their advancement to top management roles in the hotel sector is a testament to this. The societal and occupational responsibilities that women play are impacted by a multitude of social, cultural, and economic variables. Increasing the visibility and acceptability of women in leadership roles is a goal of the hospitality sector. The research team behind this study set out to learn more about women's professional abilities and the obstacles they encounter on the job. We will use an approach that incorporates both quantitative and

qualitative data analysis. Workers at a hotel in Bhopal will get the surveys and fill them out. [10]

Female workers must be an essential component of any hotel's employment; otherwise, the establishment will not be able to function. However, there is a noticeable trend of women leaving the service industry for other professional paths. As a result, this article zeroes in on this facet of women's career transitions and investigates why these workers quit the sector. In addition to this, the article seeks to discover a number of additional variables linked to the career change, such as the length of time that women work in the hospitality industry. The trend of female workers' development and the factors that have led to their departure from the hospitality sector. The women who worked in hotels but now work in retail, academia, or stay at home to raise their children were the subjects of a survey that provided the main data. On the other hand, books, research papers, and journals were the sources of secondary data. The purpose of this article is to investigate why some women leave the hospitality industry for alternative careers. [11]

In an effort to help their workers maintain a healthy work-life balance, many contemporary companies are putting more emphasis on employee wellness programs. When work and personal lives are out of sync, it may have a detrimental effect on employees' well-being. Long hours and stress are commonplace in the hospitality industry because of the exceptional level of care that guests expect. Stress, both mental and physical, is common in the hospitality sector because to the high levels of unwavering professionalism, the ambiguity of daily rosters, and the abruptness of job demands. Your everyday life and mental changes may undergo some adaptation as a result of this. One hundred and eighty-one working-age men and women, both single and in relationships, with and without children participated in the study, which made use of quantitative research methods and a basic random sample approach. Our research indicates that female employees in the hospitality sector are disproportionately impacted. [12]

The research set out to measure the impact of work-life balance on employee performance, attrition, and stress levels in the workplace. Efforts to achieve a work-life balance in the hotel business are also the focus of this research. The study's recommendations may have included taking into account personnel located wherever in India. Future studies may think about more targeted goals. Workers at the lowest echelons of an organization might be a part of future studies. Using more precise variables would allow for a more in-depth investigation. The study's lack of

independence stems from its reliance on responses from 5 star hotel staff and management, which raised several red flags. Furthermore, the survey was carried out in the present circumstances, and it is possible that the respondents' thoughts and expectations would change over time. The research just took into account white-collar workers at five-star hotels. The majority of workers at five-star hotels experience problems including long hours, overtime, and workplace stress as a result of work pressure, according to the research's findings. Keeping one's job and personal lives in harmony is a challenge for many workers. A large number of workers reported putting in more than eight hours each day. While some manage to juggle work and family life, others lose out on important family events. Working long hours does sometimes impact one's effectiveness at work, according to the workers. [13]

Human resource policy influences work-life balance concerns, according to this research of 30 hotel workers in Geneva. Workers were able to stay put thanks to work-life programs, according to surveys that included attitude measures and free-form inquiries. Increased schedule flexibility and mutually productive relationships with line supervisors were found as variables that positively influenced employee well-being in this research. Long work hours, invasion of personal life, diminished social and familial life, increased exhaustion and stress, and a lack of personal time were some of the negative ones. Organizational support and the acknowledgment of informal feedback might help workers with work-life balance concerns, according to the study. [14]

5: DISCUSSION

The alarm of "Work-Life-Balance" goes out, especially for women in the workforce and lot of people know that the hospitality industry, which includes high-end hotels and restaurants, is notorious for its high employee stress levels. Scarcity of employees, particularly women who currently make up nearly half of the hotel industry's managerial and staffing positions because of the service-centric character of the industry this is due to the complications faced by women in the workforce in the hotel industry which has been in light in various research papers presented here and all push the same notion which required a thrust for hospitality firms to recognize the challenges that female workers have on the job and provide support for them.

6: Conclusion

The research highlights the multifaceted nature of stressors experienced by female employees, encompassing workplace demands, societal expectations, and personal responsibilities. It becomes evident that achieving a harmonious work-life balance is not merely an individual concern but an intricate interplay of organizational policies, cultural norms, and personal coping strategies. In conclusion, the findings underscore the imperative for proactive measures within the hotel industry to address the unique stressors faced by female employees. These measures should encompass flexible work arrangements, supportive organizational cultures, and targeted interventions to mitigate stress and enhance work-life equilibrium. By recognizing and alleviating the challenges faced by female professionals, the hotel industry can foster a more inclusive and supportive work environment, ultimately benefiting both employees and the industry as a whole. This review contributes valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on gender dynamics and work-life balance within the hospitality sector, encouraging further research and proactive initiatives for positive change.

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