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## *Influence of Children on Work Performance and Work Continuity of Women Employees in Indian IT Industry*

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The Indian IT industry has witnessed a revolution, whereby, there has been proliferation of jobs in the industry. This has seen to more women entering the workforce at various positions in the field. Prior studies suggest that over 30% of workforce in IT Companies is women. This is a significant change witnessed in the Indian labor market. Women are playing the roles of experts, and at the same time, play the role of the homemaker. Therefore, this has contributed to the immense pressure when women try to balance work and family issues. On the other hand, there is an inconsistent representation of women employees in Indian IT firms (Kumari and Devi, 2013).

Partly, it is due to the pressure women undergo in trying to balance roles they play at home and work. Therefore, some Indian IT firms opt to deprive women the privilege of managerial position due to this factor. Prior studies further suggest that women who have children tend to concentrate more on their children, when compared to work issues. Therefore, they opt to quit jobs, in order to take care of their children. In addition, other studies have revealed that leakage of women talent begins early during their careers. This is when women have to juggle some familial tasks, and demands of the employer (Valk and Srinivasan, 2011).

Work and family are very important for women employees. This explains why there have been many studies on this subject over the past three decades. There is a need to balance and integrate family needs and work life. The changes seen in the social structures resulting from dual career couples, single parents, many parents with care responsibilities for their children, aging population and children has contributed to the increased investigations in this area of study. The studies have made apparent that globalization, is partly to blame for this phenomena. It has made it hard for women to balance work, and their children in many diverse societies in the globe (Poduval and Poduval, 2009).

The Indian IT industry is characterized by several factors. The factors include odd and long working hours, which some of the women employees find hard to cope with owing to the family roles they have to play, such as breastfeeding, and other children associated roles. Therefore, such women employees opt to quit their jobs. In this context, it is apparent that children have substantial influence on the continuity of women employees, and subsequent performance. This paper provides a framework that guides a subsequent study on this subject. It achieves this by providing an outline of the topic, and developing a research design for the study(Srinivasan and Nakra, 2014).

### II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Indian Information Technology industry is rapidly advancing. Evidently, many working mothers are finding jobs in this industry. Working mothers are those that, on one hand have the capacity to take up maternal roles, while on the other hand, and have to perform in their respective jobs to provide for their families. Owing to this, some working mothers may find it hard

to manage both maternal and work demands. This may lead to their discontinuity with work to cater for their children's needs. Therefore, this becomes a significant problem, which calls for research to ascertain the issue at hand.

### **III. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

After providing a framework for subsequent research in the subject matter, this paper will provide an insight into the influence of children, on the performance, and work continuity of working mothers.

### **IV. THE CONTEXT OF A WORKING MOTHER**

Prior studies define a mother as a woman with the capability to combine work demands with the role of raising a child. In this context, there is the stay at home mother, and the other mother who works away from home, but still manages to fulfill her maternal roles. Several aspirations have the capacity to compel women into working. They include material aspirations, and necessities of the daily life. On the other hand, a qualified woman opts to work in order to maintain an efficient career, and achieve financial independence. This is the attribute of the single mother, who combines such attributes to provide for her child's need, but still maintain her position as an independent provider of the family (Poduval and Poduval, 2009).

Conversely, governments have realized the role of such women, and developed policies, which aim to protect these women employees. This is because the government recognizes the importance of childcare. Various employers from various organizations have come out to support women employees by providing maternity leaves, and benefits for working mothers. Several factors including health status, breastfeeding, and social support influence women employees, especially after childbirth. In addition, friends, and work related factors, such as timing to return work, work stress, and workplace support play a role in the decision to continue working, or opt out to take care of their children (Yantzi et al., 2007).

Owing to this, there have been many questions. For instance, can a working mother perform in her work, and continue with motherhood roles? The answer to this question varies owing to the workplace conditions, but there is a consistency. The answer varies from "yes" to a vehement "no". Prior studies suggest that women employees who were working prior to their marriage, show the tendency to take protracted leaves of absence, or entirely opt into taking the role of motherhood (Baker and Milligan, 2005). In such cases, some women go to the extent of opting out of their careers for good to take care of their children.

### **V. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The study aims to provide a framework, which will help the investigator in carrying out the subsequent research. In this study, the following question will serve as the guideline for the subsequent study:

1. How do children influence the work performance and work continuity of women employees in Indian IT industry?

### **VI. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Prior studies in this subject suggest that India is a transitioning society, whereby the traditional roles of women as homemakers have substantial influence. Owing to this, the women employees find it hard to balance their roles as employees, and their roles as mothers. Notably, the Indian IT industry, over the past decade has accommodated women employees, especially in the software sector. On the other hand, this increase has seen to many studies on the influence of the children on the work performance, and work continuity for these women. Nevertheless, there is a need for other studies to make it apparent the underlying issues on this subject (Srinivasan and Nakra, 2014).

Many women agree that careers are important aspects of their lives, and some feel that careers define them. Women felt that careers are important because they help them to support their children financially. However, other women in the IT industries felt that they were unable to perform, owing to the concentration on their children. They felt that although the work was important, their children came first. In this case, some of them opted out of jobs to take care of their children until they

become of age. In this regard, some employers have opted to provide social support to their women employees (Ethiraj et al., 2005).

Social support is a crucial factor to the commitment, and subsequent performance in women employees, especially those with children. When the employer supports their women employees socially, they contribute to the enhancement of family work balance. This is in the context of providing on-site care, flexi time, and telecommuting opportunities for women employees. In addition, this further contributes to the reduction of tension concerning the children of women employees. This means that women will not worry about their children. For instance, on-site care will help in constant check-up of the children by their mothers, and perform maternal care such as breastfeeding (Yantzi et. al., 2007).

Women employees, especially those with children tend to be vulnerable to stress. This is because the mothers are away from their children. These stresses cause disturbances of physical and mental capacities, which tend to affect the performance. Prior studies suggest that 87% of working mothers are in stress because they do not have time to cater for their children. In the case of India, many Indian families lack to give these mothers social support, which they badly need. In IT career, studies suggest that women employees are under pressure. Although there are many factors that result to this pressure, working mothers feel that their children are the single most important factor that causes this pressure.

Other studies suggest that employers should use work-life balance as an incentive for the working mothers in the IT industry. This will help the company realize the potential of such employees. Apparently, the Indian IT industry has witnessed many mothers coming into the workforce. Therefore, firms can use the work-life balance as a strategic move to develop child-friendly policies, which will see to the performance, and continuity of working mothers in this sector. Companies, or employers who have provided such friendly policies have realized high performance, and retention of many working mothers. Therefore, it is apparent, and conclusive that childcare friendly policies have substantial influence on work performance, and work continuity of working mothers (Kumari and Devi, 2013).

Work-life balance encompasses all the factors related to family issues, which in this context are children, and work issues, which in this context are work continuity. Apparently, employer support should focus on family issues (children). In this framework, it is clear that children have substantial influence on the work performance, and continuity of working mothers. The role of organizational support is central to the anticipated influence of children on the performance, and continuity of the working mothers. Organizational support can determine whether children will cause challenges to the working mothers (women employees) (Baker and Milligan, 2005).

Organizational support encompasses the factors mentioned earlier, which include support from supervisors, and the implementation of family friendly policies. When the organization provides opportunities such as job sharing, protected parental leave, part-time return to work options, referral services, laundry facilities, day care facilities, and flexi-time. In so doing, working mothers will experience reduced pressure, reduced stress and worry concerning their children. Therefore, they will perform highly, and will keep their jobs. Owing to the provided analysis, it is apparent that children have substantial influence on the work life of their mothers (Valk and Srinivasan, 2011).

## **VII. FURTHER RECOMMENDATION**

Apparently, the efforts to search for prior studies touching on the subject matter, in the context of Indian IT sector were futile. There were no studies, which attempt to report on the exceptional dimensions of women's role in work, and their experiences when managing their children. Owing to this, I recommend an exploratory study in order to provide a study in this context. In this study, I further recommend the use of a semi-structured interview protocol. This will be appropriate when an investigator visits an IT firm to conduct the investigation. The interview should cover topic such as educational, work and family, career development, issues at work, the experiences when managing work and children, their perception on their performance at work, relationship with their families, expectations at work, and experiences of success and failure.

Owing to the many IT firms in India, this study can use online surveys. The survey will borrow greatly from the semi-structured interview because it will contain the elements stated earlier. This is appropriate, as it will reach many women employees. In addition, owing to their expertise in information technology, it is apparent that the women employees will not find it hectic to answer online surveys.

This study opts to find out the impact children have on the performance, and work continuity of women employees. Therefore, the study will borrow information from the human resource department of various IT firms in India, and the working mothers. In this context, the human resource department will help in finding out the performance of the working mothers. On the other hand, the working mothers will help in getting relevant information concerning the influence of children on their work.

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