

# A study on the factors influencing attrition of female employees in the private corporate sector

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**Abstract** The purpose of this research paper is to study which factors have an influence on the attrition of female employees in the private corporate sector and what is the existing infrastructure to curb the attrition of female employees. To analyze what gender diversity challenges are faced by women in the workplace and what are the ways to overcome it. This paper provides a preliminary understanding of the factors influencing attrition of female employees in the private corporate sector and uses references of existing infrastructure to curb female attrition, to understand the same. Future research should use alternative methods and conduct a survey on the topic. There are countless factors that lead to women attrition in the corporate sector but these can be divided into broad categories that are personal life problems and work life problems. Female employees are an integral part of any company and managers need to formulate policies that actually fulfil the needs of the female employees and are not just superficial. The following research paper attempts to make a contribution to the existing literature which deals with the factors affecting attrition of female employees in private corporate sector. Various aspects of the subject are studied to comprehend in detail, the reasons for female attrition and if there has been effort in making workplaces conducive and safe for women employees.

**Keywords** —attrition, private corporate sector, female employees, grievance redressal, glass ceiling, retention

## I. INTRODUCTION

Attrition of employees basically means (1)the gradual reduction in the number of employees in an organization by not replacing those who leave due to factors like retirement, resignation, elimination of a position, personal health or other similar reasons. This is mainly of five types : Voluntary resignation, involuntary attrition, retirement, internal attrition, demographic. Among the major problems faced by HR managers, one is attrition and its impact has received considerable attention by managers to improve the retention of employees in the company and inducing a sense of loyalty among employees. According to Gallup, almost 50% of employees look for a new job.

It is well known that having a diverse workforce is a great asset to any company and even the economy and therefore companies in the corporate sector must ensure that they retain their female employees and curb female employee attrition. Attrition level of women is lower than that of men. This is largely because women are more productive, focused, organized and disciplined at work. One of the reasons being that women have multiple roles to play and need to organize their time accordingly and so they are efficient in their work and women face a plethora of barriers in their work life and their work life can never be independent of their personal life as various challenges that a women faces in her personal life may force her to quit her job.

Private corporate sector is that section of the economy that is run only by individuals and companies to make profits and the state has no control over the sector. This sector grows rapidly and so do the employees they hire. There have been a significant number of companies that have tried to introduce gender diversity in their environment through diversity programs but this has not been successful in moving the needle on inclusion. Even if more women are present in the workforce there is only a small fraction which actually makes it to senior roles. According to “Zinnov-Intel India Gender Diversity Benchmark”, the percentage of women at the junior level is 38% and at the mid-level jobs it is 20% women, but only a mere 11% in senior roles.

Women’s status in the corporate sector varies from city to city and even company to company. The highest gender diversity at the workplace is seen in Bengaluru where women make up 34% of the workforce and this is followed by Mumbai with 33% and Pune with 32%. These numbers add up to 31% of the total workforce in tier 1 cities and 25% in tier 2 cities. It is also reported that big companies are more inclusive with 33% of women in their workforce while mid-sized companies and small companies have 27% and 21% respectively.

Making a workplace conducive for women employees has to be viewed from the perspective of what women actually want rather than what the organization wants. What every working woman needs is the ability to have a flexible working environment and for this organizations can provide working

ours to women which suit their requirements, given they are reasonable. Most important of all is to ensure that women are included in the planning and decision making activities. They must feel that their position is required and respected here and only then will women employees strive to achieve the organizational objectives.

## II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To study factors contributing to attrition of female employees in private corporate sector.
- To analyze the effectiveness of strategies to combat attrition of female employees.
- To highlight the significance of creating conducive and safe working spaces for women employees.

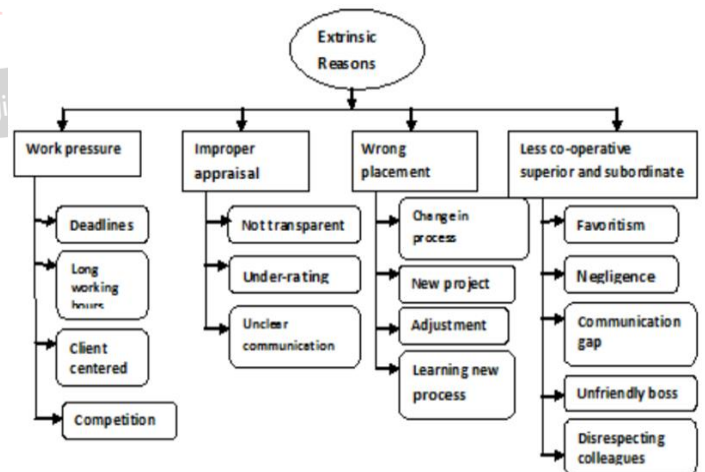
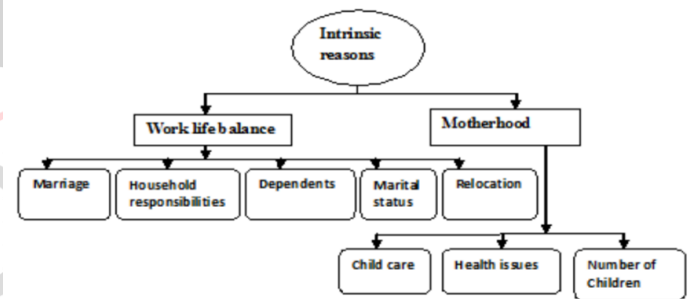
## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

• **Saira Yousaf et. al. (2014)**, investigated and explored the factors that affect retention of female employees and ways to decrease the turnover rate of female employees in organizations. They used survey questionnaire as a statistical tool to find that although many factors contribute to lower retention of female employees, but social factors, family factors, role of organization and role of supervisor are the four major contributors. They found that family issues play a significant role in retention because the survey showed that most women leave their jobs due to family pressure because families do not support a woman’s choice to keep working as they believe she cannot handle both home and work life. Social issues like unequal respect between males and females and male domination in third world countries like Pakistan plays a major role in the attrition of women in the prime of their careers. The behavior of the supervisor towards a female employee also affects her decision to continue with a job considering women are subjected to verbal, physical and sexual abuse at the workplace which does not facilitate a conducive environment for women inducing them to quit their jobs. The researchers concluded that the government can play a vital role in developing a respect prestige and easiness for the working ladies.

- **Dr.R.Mohan Kumar & A. Astalin Melba(2015)**, identified the reason for the attrition of women employees in IT sector and provided strategies to curb the attrition using 523 respondents using statistical tool : Factor analysis, correlation, and KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) factor and found out that even though women attrition is a widely seen issue but escaping it is not an unattainable task as it only requires that a company gain the dedication and commitment of the employee and make sure that the strategies that exist to curb attrition are extensively followed. A manager can retain a female employee by providing safety, secured job, good working conditions, reasonable workload, favorable work environment and positive interpersonal relationship. The researchers suggested that an analysis of the accurate

measures of past and existing attrition should be carried out when female attrition is suspected in a company.

- **Sharda Singh et. al.(2017)**, identified the numerous factors which are said to be responsible for women’s workforce attrition in Indian IT/ITES sector by using the statistical tool: Thematic analysis. They categorized the factors that influence women employees attrition into two themes: intrinsic factors i.e. work life balance and motherhood and extrinsic factors i.e. work pressure, long working hours, faulty appraisal practices, forceful transfers and less co-operative colleagues. They collected data from 8 women working in different companies, different states and different levels of hierarchy and carried out an extensive interview where the participants were asked a series of questions to list the factors that affect the retention of women in jobs. Existing strategies to combat female attrition include better compensation, more interesting work, promotion opportunities, inclusion in decision making etc. A detailed illustration of the factors identified by the authors is given below.



- **Nafeesa Begum & Dr. G. Brindha (2017)**, listed the challenges and issues raised in retaining female employees and that there exist innovative practices by managers that have been successfully implemented in various organization to curb the loss of female talent. The findings of the researchers suggested that weaker parts of the organization should be converted to become the strong parts by consulting

the female employees on what needs to be changed. Traditional roles expected to be fulfilled by women, lack of role models and protected environment at home lead to lack of maturity and confidence, landmark events in personal life like marriage, change in priorities, inability to manage after return from maternity were some of the challenges and issues with regard to female employees that the authors listed.

- **Matthew Joy Maniyamkott (2020)**, identified the need for female friendly empathetic workspaces especially post the pandemic because it has intensified the problems that female employees were already facing. The author suggested the ways in which companies can use their resources to curb female employee attrition rate. The author mentioned (1) flexible working hours (2) maternity leaves (3) female mentoring programmes (4) Enhancing cultural merit (5) salary equity audits (6) understanding challenges faced by working mothers (7) creating a culture conscious of inclusion, as ways to make sure that companies create a more conducive workspace for its female employees. The author also discussed the need for custom tailored mentoring programmes for female employees to provide them the right resources and identify the potential in these workers to help them plan their career.

#### IV. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The study is significant as it explores the factors which influence the attrition rate of female employees in the private corporate sector. The quality of work life denotes all the organizational inputs that are aimed at a female employee's safety, healthy working conditions and enhancing the organizational effectiveness. Female employees face various problems in their work life and it may sometimes become difficult to continue with a job when the company they are working for does not incorporate the things required for female employees to continue with their job. The study collects literature to list and identify the factors that influence women employees from leaving their job or what keeps them from re-joining and what is the existing infrastructure for curbing female employee attrition and lastly, what is the significance of a conducive working environment for women employees.

While researching, a gap was identified in previously done researches that even though companies want to build a diverse workforce and come up with various policies to curb female employee attrition, they fail to implement the formulated policies efficiently and also fail to take into consideration what a female employee actually requires and instead work on the basis of what the organization thinks the women want. In other words, the female employees for whom the policies are being formed are seldom asked to give their opinions on what policies will actually help them.

Studies are carried out and female employees are extensively interviewed to obtain information regarding what it is that aids in their leaving an organization before climbing up the

corporate ladder and also what stops them from re-joining the workforce post a leave or break like after maternity and how the existing policies are functioning is also studied; but rarely is a study carried out where extensive information is collected from the female workforce about what facilities and policies will actually help them in staying in or re-joining the workforce.

The focus remains on the problem and not the solution. What is the requirement now is to gather information about what the female employees suggest should be the policies and facilities for their welfare which will make their workplace conducive and efficient for them and keep them from leaving their jobs.

#### V. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is limited because the research is not explanatory or empirical as it is predominantly based on secondary data like journal articles, research papers, newspaper articles etc..

#### VI. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Considering the nature of the topic and the research objectives, secondary research method is used by the researcher. Various articles in newspapers, journals, and books, and research papers written by renowned authors were referred to for collection of data. The literature relevant to the study was collected and analyzed and post that it was reviewed in the study. The referencing is done following APA 6th edition style of citation.

#### VII. CONCLUSION

Female employees are a real asset to any company as they are very loyal and committed and tend to stick to an organization which they feel is good for them. But they must be provided with reasons to be dedicated to an organization and managers must try to find policies to make sure that the female employee attrition rate remains low in their organization. Mostly female employees quit their job rapidly because of cultural and environmental problems. Women have to handle multiple aspects in life simultaneously and most of the times it is with little or no support by family and colleagues.

There are various factors that influence women attrition in the private corporate sector, some of them being : marriage, dependency on family, health issues, child care, rigid working hours, wrongful transfers, etc. These factors act as barriers and keep women from climbing up the corporate ladder. Managers try to bring out policies that will curb attrition but their effectiveness is not as much as they would like because the policies do not counter the root issues that female employees face and often are not implemented efficiently.

The study suggests that attrition of female employees is widespread and can be seen at all levels in the private corporate sector. The factors that influence this attrition can

be broadly divided into three factors: family, societal, workspace factors. Women are pressurized by their families to quit jobs and focus on their household responsibilities which signifies the belief that women are the only caretakers of their household and that they cannot manage a work life balance. Societal pressure of getting married or having children or focusing only the household hinders the growth of female employees leading to them dropping out of the workforce before they can make it to top level management. Workplace environment also plays a role in high attrition rate considering women are physically, verbally and sexually abused in their workspaces which is not good for their mental health and they leave their jobs as result of this pressure.

There is a need to make sure that women are delivered a conducive and safe working environment because if they live in an apprehension that there might be some harm that can be inflicted upon them during the course of their employment their productivity will most probably decrease costing both: the company as well as the economy. This will also affect the potential of the women herself.

Future scope of the research could include identifying, through primary research, what are the requirements of female employees and what are the methods that actually facilitate retention. Also, what are the issues with implementation of existing policies which don't allow efficient practice of the retention strategies.

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