

Factors Affecting Retention of Female Employees in Organizations

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The basic aim of this research paper is to identify /investigate/explore the factors affect retention of female employees in organizations. The paper does not only study the factors but it also talks about the ways to decrease turnover rate of female employees in organizations.

Design/methodology/procedure: Qualitative as well as quantitative research methodology has been adopted in this paper. The researchers have conducted a survey with the help of a questionnaire in three types of organization; i.e., hospitals, banks and educational institutions situated in Bahawalpur City of Pakistan.

Findings: The researchers have found that although there are many factors that affect retention of female employees at their jobs but *social factors, family factors, role of organization and role of supervisor* are the four major contributors.

Contribution/ value addition: The paper provides a basis to understand the problems that are faced by female employees in their organizations. It is a good contributor to the knowledge world of human resource management that explores factors that affect female jobs and provides solution to the problems faced by female employees at their jobs. The paper can also help the management of the organizations and government authorities to pay their attention to the problems of their female employees.

KEY WORDS: Human Resource Management, Female Employees, Employee retention, Turnover Rate

1. INTRODUCTION

During last few decades there has been a tremendous increase in the population of female workforce in organizations. Women have excelled in all spheres of life. They are contributing towards the national economy as much as the men are. With the increasing number of female employees in workforce, there is a transformation from the traditional roles to working role. Now female employees have higher aspirations and striving for better position on equal foot with male employees in organizations (Linda, 2001).

The increasing proportion of working ladies is contributing towards the national and international economy. Despite the fact that number of female employees are increasing in world labor force, the job turnover rate is also very high in case of female employees. There are many factors that affect retention of female employees in organizations (Hom et al., 2001).

Current research is an attempt to investigate factors that compel female employees to leave their jobs and also to identify those issues which may increase retention of female employees in organizations.

Due to economic pressures female employees are enforced to take dual responsibility of income generation and their families at the same time. Working ladies are able to generate income while simultaneously taking care of their children and other household responsibilities. They also continue their jobs following child births. The greater responsibility of balancing parenting and their jobs increases stress in female employees. Unfortunately the policy makers and organizations have little awareness of creating the friendly work life balance policies that balance parenting and employment for females working in organizations (Sandra et al., 2000).

Work life balance policies are found instrumental in reducing stress that working ladies usually face in organizations. These polices play an important role in creating a meaningful balance between family and work life of female employees. A good balance between family and work life of female employees may increase the retention period of female employees in organizations and vice versa (James, 1996).

Thompson, et al. (2005) has studies that the role of family is another important factor that affects retention of female employees in organizations. As a significant proportion of female employees is a part of organizational

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workforce now a days, their participation rate has been increased as they are striving for a better education, research and job opportunities. They face family problems because it is difficult for them to balance the work and family demands without good work life balance policies in organizations. There is a dual responsibility on females to earn and to provide care to their children and elderly parents, which is very challenging for a female in absence of good work life balance policies. As a result in a case where there are no good work life policies for females in organizations, females end up leaving the job. Hom *et al.* (2001) studies that female employees would be more likely to pursue their jobs if they are provided leaves of up to 12 weeks to take care of their new born, a child care center at their jobs, transportation facilities and flexible work schedules and most important of all the maximum family support.

The next factor that affects the retention of female employees in organizations is the role of organization. In most of the cases organizations do not provide adequate support, cooperation and guidance in female professional matters because females are not considered equal to male employees by the managers. It is believed that females are not credible as much as male employees are. The halo effect regarding female employees is that they cannot tackle stress and are unable to make quick decisions under uncertain environment. The supervisor should empower female employees and provide them freedom and support to take responsibility. This is how, females can own their work and can take responsibility (Linda, 2001).

Supervisor's role is also significant in creating supportive working conditions for female employees such as flexible working hours, job security, equal opportunities of growth and development, friendly and supportive behavior of male colleagues and ethical treatment with respect and prestige etc. Merge (2011) have shown that there is a lot of discrimination that female employees faces in organizations due to the mind set of male supervisors that female employees are more likely than male employees to quit their jobs to care for their families. Managers believe that it is very risky to offer a woman variety of fast-track assignments as women usually quit their jobs for their families. Due to such mind set of supervisors' female employees are discouraged and discriminated in timely promotions, pay rises, higher assignments and other benefits.

Most of the working ladies complain that male colleagues are not supportive and cooperative for female staff in their organizations. Somehow male's colleagues have a devaluing behavior towards female's potential and they are mostly unwilling to accept equal rights for females. Linda (2011) has found out the male employees mostly does not recognize and value the competent females and are mostly insecure by the competent female employees as compared to their male counterparts. They show less professional respect to females and resist the female authority.

If the female employees are given equal participation in decision making, the work place environment becomes more antagonistic, solution oriented, realistic and encouraging for the entire workforce.

Social factors are next on the list of factors that affect the retention of female employees in organizations. Working ladies feel uncomfortable in a male dominated society because males show very low professional respect towards female employee. Males are reluctant in accepting female commands and influence. Males feel threatened more by a competent and determined female employee as compared to a male counterpart. The social acceptance for working ladies in all the fields is low because the females are considered inferior and weak as compared to male. In third world countries this factor contributes much more. In these countries working ladies are not given any respect rather they are considered to have bad character (Merge, 2011).

Farida *et al.* (2011) studied that working women make complaint of unethical and ill-mannered behavior of males every where outside their homes, in offices, on roads, in buses and even in their streets and neighbor hoods. Females points out that they are insecure and uncomfortable working with males because they are socially unaccepted as colleagues. They are not given respect even by the male customers who use to tease them just for the sake of fun or to chase them enforcing them for bad character. The proper arrangement of transport system like separate buses for female employees may reduce female's turnover rate in organizations. It is more useful for the female employee who is living far from her working place. It will reduce pressure of social unacceptance as well as the stress and financial burden because the public transport is very expensive and scarcely available.

The organization does not provide adequate resources like accommodation, transportation, privacy in working environment to its female staff. Female employees expect the organization to provide them with proper transport facilities and separate toilets, washing, rest facilities where they have privacy. These resources and facilities also help female employees to reduce burden and stress at their jobs (Merge, 2011).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Women are more in jobs today and it is challenging for them to create a good balance between work and family demands. They find it difficult to continue their job due to family pressures. Besides earning the most challenging task for female employees is to take care of their children's and elderly parents. Female not only take care of their kids but they are bound to care for their in laws and elderly parents for fulfilling their psychological and emotional needs in our

society. It becomes difficult for them to continue their jobs when their children's are being ignored, so they end up leaving the job (Sandra et al., 2000).

In order to retain female employees, organizations should focus on sophisticated work life policies which are very important in reducing the turnover rate. Work life policies are the base level indicators of organizations, prioritizing work over family or family over work (Thompson et al., 2005). Organizations must offer flexible work scheduling and sufficient leaves to their employees so they can create a good balance between their family and work (Noor, 2009). According to Batt et al. (2003) organizations must focus on implementing work life balance policies as these help in reducing turnover rate and retain the employees for a longer period of time in organizations.

Yasbek (2004) pointed out that the work life balance policies have been found effective in creating a work environment which decreases stress to a greater extent. It provides a platform where there is greater productivity and lesser probability of accidents in organizations.

The childcare subsidies, eldercare programs, counseling and referral, and flexible working hours are elements of a good work life balance policy. It creates a balance between obligations at the workplace and obligations at home that is more meaningful and less stressful. According to Yu, (2008) work-life balance policies have a great effect on the turnover rate of employees. Females who are forced to continue doing a job because of economic pressures found difficulty in balancing between work and family life. The policies can be very instrumental in reducing stress and creating a meaningful balance between females work life and family life (James, 1996).

Thompson, et al. (2005) have pointed out in their research that organizations have now understand the importance of work life balance policies and have shown a great concern for applying these policies. The realization and awareness of benefits of work life balances and friendly policies have stimulated organizations to adopt the policies and reduce the turnover rate (Hom et al., 2001). Bashir et al (2008) maintained that now a day's, organizations are more aware about the work life balance and implementation of work life balance policies. Yasbek, (2004); Ling et al. (2006) studied that non friendly and complex policies along with additional working hours increase the stress and turnover intention among employees. According to Forsyth et al. (2007) when employees feel that their organization is supportive and providing them a good work life balance, their job satisfaction increases that ultimately reduces their turnover intentions.

Sandra et al. (2000) stressed that females find it difficult to continue their jobs after child birth as child births make it difficult for females to create a balance between their work life and family life, so, they end up leaving their job. Child care arrangements can be hard to find, unstable and costly, substantially reducing the benefits of employment for females and therefore, the probability of working also. The basic reason behind this is that females cannot leave their child unattended at home so they need day care centers. A day care (child care) center will help the females to carry on their responsibilities and maintain a balance between their work and family. In Pakistan, workplaces are not structured to accommodate female workers with dependent children. It is essential for the policy makers and employers to understand the need and to modify the working conditions that match the female employee needs. Unfortunately there is a lack of awareness about the cost and benefit ratio of the working conditions that facilitate parenting and retain women workers following childbirth in terms of inefficiency, labor shortages, reduced fertility, or increased family poverty.

Quality of care is an important factor in retention of female employees in the organizations; it affects mothers' decisions through affecting the costs and benefits of work and home time. If there are more numbers of care givers in the day care centers then each child will get sufficient individual attention and quality of care. This way, mothers are less likely to leave the job because they are satisfied in term of quality of care that their child is getting. They will be more inclined to continue job and less inclined to leave the job (Meyers 1993).

In a Male dominated society, females are not given equal respect and acceptance because of certain stereotypes and devaluing behavior towards female potential. Male are unwilling to accept females as more competent than them because of the mindset that female is inferior to male. According to the research males are inclined to resist the influence of a competent female and are found more likely to be threatened by her as compared to male counterparts (Linda, 2001). Females have a lower participation rate in decision making in organizations and have low employment ratio because working ladies are considered to have a bad character still in many societies. Female employees feel trouble in getting comfortable in a male dominated society because male show them less professional respect whatever the place is. Females are not given respect by men at their jobs, in their offices, on the roads, in busses, in neighborhoods and by the male customers also. The situation regarding giving rights to female employees is worse in third world countries, may be because of poverty, ignorance and certain stereotypes that has been passed on from one generation to another.

In the last few decades working ladies of Pakistan have proven their abilities nation wide and internationally. So, they deserve respect, acceptance and recognition for their efforts and abilities (Anne, 1998). They expect equal support and respect from their male colleagues because they are no more less then their counterparts. This will enhance their job satisfaction and lead to retention of the female employee. Unfortunately most of the times males are given promotions and bonuses because they have a good relationship with their male boss whereas females cannot create a close relationship with their male supervisors, hence discriminated in getting promotions and pay rises etc.

Poor transport system are also adding to the problems of working women. Separate buses and bus stop stations for women can reduce the transport problems for working ladies as well as the mental stresses from them. This is another fact that public transport is costly, scarcely available and unpleasant. Government is still unable to provide adequate transport facilities to the commuters, even in the major cities of the country. Hostile environment and lack of infrastructure provision decreases female labor force participation. Most women wanted their organizations to provide them more convenient transportation options. Particularly women who were living far from their workplace and were making their own commuting arrangements felt that availability of official transport facility would greatly reduce their financial burden and mental stress. Organizations should provide convenience to their female staff because it will be very helpful for retaining the female staff (Farida *et al.*, 2011).

Karen *et al.* ((2001) studied that the biasness which reflects in inequitable pay, ranks and promotions can affect the overall performance of female employees in organizations. Professional exposure, mentoring, promotions and equal opportunities of demanding challenges, provided to female employees contribute to their professional development. Non provision of these decreases their morale and productivity which may also compel them to leave their jobs. Encouragement and appreciation by the supervisor can be effective in giving female employees a sense of pride and ownership. When the supervisor empowers the female employee to take action, it gives them the sense of taking responsibilities for their job. They owe the job and the impact of their performance on the organization. When the female employees are given support, resources and freedom to take action, they are basically given responsibility and ownership. This increases their self motivation. A supervisor can motivate the employee by providing opportunity to follow through their own ideas; this will create a strong sense of accomplishment and ultimately reduces turnover increases job satisfaction (Merge, 2011).

It is also a fact that male dominated businesses always perceive females as minor as it is considered that the women can not handle the stress or they are unable to make quick decisions. Male employees considered females as less credible than males and listen and use information provided by male with more attention but ignore an identical information provided by females. Similarly male employees perceive females as inferior. There is a lack of support, cooperation and guidance from supervisors for female employees. It took years for a woman to be voted the best 'employee of the month in organizations as studied by Linda (2011).

In successful organizations each member has an opportunity to share his/her perspectives and voice their ideas in participative decision making. An equal participation of females and involvement in decision making can improve team effectiveness and results in a better decision making in organizations. There is a direct relationship between decision effectiveness and organizational performance. The work places which show appreciation for female participation in decision making are less combative; being more consensus and solution oriented; being more practical and supportive of other staff and so forth. If there is a greater participation by women in a work place, it will ultimately enhance the job satisfaction and increases their level of commitment. This helps in female job retention and decreases their turnover in organizations (Morley, 2006).

If females are encouraged to participate in decision making, there is a better chance of achieving desirable results. All the organizations which provide a gender equitable environment are the one where rewards are given on merit and information is shared and employees are given equal chances of participation in decision making. There is a positive relationship between the employee satisfaction improved performance in terms of lower costs of turnover, absenteeism and organizational productivity. Management practices and workplace cultures that are good for women are also good for men and for the employer's financial results (Jennifer, 1998).

Support and appreciation for the efforts plays an important role in motivating the employee. The immediate communication and recognition can enhance the job satisfaction. Males have transactional style which is more conventional. They hold an attitude which is discouraging for the female employee. They do not empower or give a sense of ownership to female. Lack of appreciation and less autonomy results in de-motivation and dissatisfaction amongst the employees which ultimately leads to high turnover in organizations. Male colleagues do not accept females as more competent than them because of the mindset that females are subordinate to males. The level of acceptance about females potential is low that is why she is given less participation in decision making. Female believed that male managers allow them fewer opportunities. Females have difficulty in getting accepted in the organizational practice and male show them slow professional respect (Yusuf, 2008).

On the other hand, work place violence can be troublesome for the interpersonal relationship; this violence can be of many types like gender based harassment, physical or verbal abuse and insulting jokes about women. Organizations under-estimate the incidence of gender-related harassment and its impact on the organization's performance but it reduces efficiency and productivity, quality problems, loss in company image, difficulty in future recruiting. So, support and appreciation by the male colleagues play an important role in reducing the turnover and retention of female employees. In a gender equitable work environment, there are equal opportunities of getting education, employment

maintain health and nutritional status and equal participation in decision making that effects their family lives or work life. Females in Pakistan are not empowered the way they deserve. Generally, the point of view regarding giving rights to female is hindered by this thought that they are inferior to men and they have to obey them even when they are not educated (Chardie, 2004).

The perception of uneducated class in Pakistan is that working women do not possess good characters. The basic reason behind the unacceptance of female in society is an inequitable gender environment and lack of education. The situation regarding empowerment of women is worse in Pakistan. They are considered as a subordinate and are ignored and neglected in terms of health, education, employment, opportunities mainly because of lack of education and contemporary traditions. In the past women has been treated with contempt to such an extent that she is considered not more then a child bearing maid. She has been considered as commodity which does not posses any feelings and emotions (Bashir et al., 2008, Farida et al., 2011)

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is an exploratory research which is supported by a survey strategy. The survey was conducted to identify the factors that effect retention of female employees in organizations.

A questionnaire was developed by the authors and was distributed amongst the female employees working in different organizations including hospitals, banks and educational institutions to explore the factors that affect job retention of female employees in organizations.

The sampling frame included 03 hospitals, 07 banks and 05 schools from both the public and private sectors. In-depth interviews and questionnaire were used as key sources of collecting the primary data.

The sampling method used in this research was Stratified Random Sampling. Three stratum were selected as Hospitals, Banks and Educational Institutions. The sample size determined by the researchers was 77 female employees, (the respondents) belonging to all three stratum explained above.

The sample size has been determined by using the following formula (Yamnee, 1967);

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where

N= Total population which is 335 here

e = Margin of error, which is taken 10% here

n = Sample Size

Therefore we can say with 90% confidence level that our sample size of 77 is correct and a true representative of this population.

A comprehensive questionnaire consisting of 14 questions categorized in 04 major dimensions including 05 interview questions was designed in order to get detailed insight of the retention of female employees. 77 valid questionnaires were analyzed in terms of frequency of the data by using SPSS program.

The results of the questionnaire were discussed to identify which factor contributes the most towards retention of female employees in organizations and what are the problems regarding retention of female employees in this sector. In order to increase reliability of current research in-depth interviews have also been conducted from the respondents and were included in discussion.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH FINDINGS.

4.1 DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE RESPONDENTS:

The survey was conducted in the 03 hospitals, 07 banks and 05 schools situated in Bahawalpur City of Pakistan. All organizations belonged to both the public and private sector. Profile of the respondents included: young and senior female doctors, female officers working in banks and female teachers serving in schools, colleges and universities.

4.2 FAMILY ISSUES ARE SIGNIFICANT IN RETENTION OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES:

During survey, family issues have been explored as one of the most important factor that affect retention of female employees in organizations. It has been revealed from the survey that most of the times female employees leave their jobs due to family pressure. It has been found that, in most of the cases families are not supportive for female workers;

rather families create problems for the continuation of their jobs. In Pakistan female workers face much family pressure to quit their jobs. Most of the females leave their jobs due to family pressure. During survey, one of the female respondents pointed out that;

“ I am going to leave this job next month.....because of my family pressure which I cannot bear.....my family does not want me to continue job as they think that I am not giving them proper time due to my job.”

Questionnaire results have also maintained the same outcomes as 35% of the respondents agreed and 33% strongly agreed the statement, *“I feel it difficult to continue my job due to family pressure”*. Researchers have found that females do not get much support from their families so that they can create a good balance between their family life and professional life. In fact non supportive behavior of families is a big hurdle for working women to manage their two faces of the life, the family and the job. 42% of the respondents agreed with 44% strongly agreed the statement that, *“I feel it difficult to create balance between my family life and professional life due to non supportive behavior of my family”*.

Respondents have also shown their concerns about non supportive behavior of their families during interview sessions as pointed out by one of the female respondents;

“My family should realize that I am doing job.....which is not so easy..... they should realize that I am a female.....physically weaker than a male.....I have to manage my job and home at the same time.....your colleagues, your boss and your subordinates can not give you relief..... but why the behavior of family is also the same like professional peers.....why don't my family think that I am a human being who get tired and face it difficult to serve its family like the way housewives do.

This is dilemma for the working ladies that they are expected to give equal time, care and efforts to their family as non working ladies do. Naturally a female is physically weaker than a male but in case of working ladies, female do much more physical work than their males. A male who does job is expected to give his energies only to his profession and gets many advantages of doing job at his home because he does not do any big hard work at his home. When he comes back to his home he is not expected to cook food for his family, to make his house home clean, to wash cloths and take care of his children and elders etc, but in case of a working women she does all the jobs of family as well as she does equal hard work at her profession. Instead of giving working ladies an advantage of being physically weaker than male they do much more hard work than their males.

There is another fact that females are not only discriminated at their offices but they are also discriminated in their families. In case if husband is transferred to another city wife is enforced to get also transfer of her job to the same city where husband is going or to leave the job if transfer is not possible. Therefore husband's relocation is also an important factor of females' turnover as 42% of the respondents agreed and 43% disagreed the question statement *“I will quit my job with my husbands' relocation”*.

4.3 RETENTION OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES IS AFFECTED LARGELY BY SOCIAL ISSUES:

Survey continued to explore the social factors that affect retention of female staff in organizations. It has been found that social factors compel the working ladies to leave their jobs on great extent in third world countries like Pakistan. It is a fact that in Pakistan like societies working ladies are not given equal respect. Rather society looks towards working women as females of bad character. Males are dominated in each and every sphere of life. Working ladies faces many problems to continue their jobs due to social unacceptance as 47% of the respondents agreed with 49% strongly agreed the question statement that *“I don not feel comfortable while working in a male dominated society”*. When asked to explain why do females not feel comfortable while working in male dominated society one of the female Banking officers pointed out;

“ this is not our world.....this is a world of malesyou know a male never accept the importance of females.....he can not even bear the equal presence of females in his society.....no mater a male is your brother, your father, your son , your husband.....or your boss at your profession, he does not accept your influence on him.....females sacrifices every where.....they work equal to malesbut their efforts are not realized by this male dominated society.....after doing equal hard work..... we the females are not given equal importance”.

A headmistress of primary school said,

“I have often encounter males collogues who resist my influence and opinion. Being a headmistress, this very thing irritates me and I am not satisfied with the male employees' behavior because they don't show professional respect towards their female boss and female collogues”

On the other hand female employees stressed that they are not given respect in society. Females are equal in number as compared to males so they want to get equal importance and respect by working outside for the betterment of their own and their families but instead of realizing the importance of their work and effort, they are not given respect by the society. Respondents pointed out that female employees face hurdle through out their working life, male customers do not give respect to female staff. Females also face many problems during traveling to their offices. As one of the female banking officers said;

“it is very difficult for a female to perform a front end job in banks.....male customers especially young boys make fun of female staff.....they intentionally go towards a female officer’s desk to tease her.....on the other hand male customers never give importance to female employees, therefore they do not accept their advise”.

A female teacher at university level pointed out the problems faced during traveling;

“ I think for working ladies the most crucial problem is their traveling.....as we all are living in a male dominated society.....males also dominate during travel.....we have to deal with male bus drivers, male bus staff and male passengers.....you can not even imagine that how many difficulties are faced by a female employee during her traveling.....I can just wish that government should take some step in this regard ad should start a separate bus service for females.”

A female doctor explained the problems of working in a male dominated society as;

“I do not know which is the way to deal best with male patients in hospitals.....males are very difficult to deal with.....I want that female doctors should only be appointed for the treatment of female patients.....male patient should be treated by male doctors only.....I do not know why don’t male patients respect a female doctors who used to work hard for their treatment, male patients do not even keep their belief in our expertise.....they think that a male doctor possess more knowledge and expertise than a female doctor.....if the mindset of male patient is of this type.....why don’t government appoint female doctors for female patients only?”

Female employees also pointed out the problems of social unacceptance, they pointed out that female employees are not accepted in the society like Pakistan and they are not seen as a females of good character, a banking officer pointed out that;

“I just curse the moment when I decided to do a job.....I think housewives are living much happier life..... a female can not do job in a society like Pakistan without sacrificing many things, I think that in Pakistan working ladies have not been accepted in any profession except teaching.....only female teachers are given respect by this society.....females working in any other profession are considered as female of bad character.....a working lady faces problems even in finding a better match for her in this society.”

4.4 ROLE OF SUPERVISOR IS CRUCIAL IN RETENTION OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES:

The third type factor which has been found crucial in the retention of female staff in organizations is the role of supervisors. Female employees have given much importance to the role of supervisor in their retention at their job. Female employees have pointed out that a supervisor may support a female employee to great extent for continuing her jobs as well as the role of supervisor may compel her to quit her job. A female banking officer pointed out that;

“It is very difficult to work under the supervision of a male boss if he is not supportive for female employees.....a boss should know how to work with and through a female employee.....he should know where to place a female officer in her office.....which assignments should be given to female staff and which to a male staff.....he should know how to respect his female sub ordinates.....if your boss lacks in these skills.....it is very difficult for a female to work with him.”

Survey results reveal that 37% females disagreed and 34% strongly disagreed the statement that, *“My boss does not provide adequate support, cooperation and guidance in my professional matters”*. On the other hand 33% disagreed with 35% strongly disagreed the statement that, *“Female staff is encouraged by the supervisors to participate in organizational decision making.”* Here about this question respondents have shown many concerns as a lady doctor pointed out that;

“A female employee is not given this much importance that she is involved by the supervisor in decision making process.....whenever an important decision is taken in your organization.....it is taken by the supervisor on consultation with male employees only.”

4.5 ROLE OF ORGANIZATION CAN NOT BE UNDERESTIMATED IN JOB RETENTION OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES:

In the end of the questionnaire used for survey there was a series of questions related to role of organization in job retention of female employees. The major role of organization in retention of female staff is to provide sufficient resources needed to a female employee like separate toilets, separate common rooms, separate workstations, proper transportation facility and child care centers etc. It is found from the survey that organizations in Pakistan are not providing proper resources to female employees as 42% of the participants have agreed with 38% strongly agreed to the statement that, *“My organization provides adequate resources (accommodation, transportation, privacy in working environment etc) to its female staff.”* One of the female bankers pointed out that;

“We the female staff can not work with male colleagues without enjoying having separate toilets and common rooms in the offices, organizations should have to realize the need of female staff for some special resources.”

It has been found that one of the strongest factors of female’s turnover in the organizations is the non provision of child care centers in the organizations. Most of the female employees leave their jobs to take care their new baby born. Organizations can retain their female employees for longer time period if they start providing child care services to their female staff. Survey results have shown that 37% respondents agreed and 38% strongly agreed the statement that, *“My organization does not provide me child care support that makes my job difficult to continue.”*

On of the lady doctors said that;

“Organizations in Pakistan are not providing sufficient resources to its female staff which are very important for females to work with male colleagues. Especially female employees face big problems at the time when they have new born babies, any organization which is appointing female employees should provide them child care centers, so that they can work properly and they can stay in the organizations for longer time period”

It is found from the survey that females are provided lesser opportunities and they are not accepted properly for their contributions in the organizations. Male colleagues don’t listen to females opinions and do not acknowledge the contribution they have made. Therefore, there is a remarkable difference between the participation that is given to female employees in decision making as compared to male employees. These differences occur because of stereotype and traditional mindset that females don’t possess the intellectual abilities to make quick decisions on their own. 33% of the respondents disagreed and 34% strongly disagreed with the statement, *“Male colleagues are supportive and cooperative in my organization.”*

Another finding of the survey is that there is a lack of appreciation and encouragement for the female’s efforts at the organizational level whereas males with the same contribution are recognized and acknowledged. Females are facing discrimination at every level whether it is at the organizational or at home. The gender inequitable environment has lead to the ignorance of female’s rights. Females expect equal opportunities of participation in decision making, equal opportunities of promotion and career growth. Survey results have revealed that 32% of the respondents strongly agreed and 31% agreed with the statement, *“I feel gender discrimination towards female staff in my organization; male staff is always given importance and preference”*.

5. CONCLUSION

The aim of this research paper was to explore factors that affect retention of female employees in organizations. Researchers have conducted this study in three types of organizations which include hospitals, banks and educational institutions. The target population of the study was female employees working in these organizations. It has been found during survey that family issues, social issues, role of supervisor and role of organization are significant factors that affect retention of female employees in organizations. The role of female employees can not be underestimated in the growth and development of any country especially in case of a third world country like Pakistan where females make half of the population.

On the bases of the findings researchers suggest that government can play a vital role in creating a respect prestige and easiness for the working ladies. Government can start separate buses for female employees including separate bus

stations as well as it can make strict legislation for those who create hurdles for working ladies or who create gender discrimination.

On the other hand organizations' role is also very significant in increasing retention rate of female employees. Organizations if want to retain female workforce should provide them required facilities like child care centers, transportation, accommodation and should train their line managers to treat equally with female employees as they do with male employees. Organizations should play much emphasis on no gender discrimination and should encourage female workers by supporting them in every possible aspect.

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