

Space Time Perspective of Women Working Night Shifts: Insights from a Primary Survey of Delhi¹

Shirin Akhter², Vijender Singh Chauhan³

Abstract

Workspace that is predominantly male, reserves for women jobs that are low-income and dead-end by nature. Women are expected to cluster into jobs that have been designated as more feminine and thus deemed more suitable for women. Our study analyses experiences of women whose nature of employment is such that they need to be out of their homes at night. We find the case of these women of special significance in analysing the gendered perspective of space-time because these women not only join the work force, but also trespass the male territory of risk taking by working at night. This paper tends to investigate gendering of time and space in context of women working night shifts in Delhi. This study is significant because it shows how differently educated and differently trained women fare differently in the same social setup, thereby emphasizing the role and importance of capability building for a better life. We use primary data obtained through focused discussions with women working night shifts, collect responses from women who work night shifts and simultaneously record the comments as posted by women on social media regarding their experiences of working night shifts. We also use our own observations and understanding of the behavior of women when they are on their jobs and the body language and behavior of those around them at that point in time.

Introduction

Gender is a social construct which stands on the prevalent notions of masculinity and femininity in any given society, at any given time. The definition of 'gender' keeps changing with the changes in mindset of people and it is very difficult to zero in upon

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² Associate professor, Zakir Husain Delhi College, University of Delhi

³ Associate professor, Zakir Husain Delhi College, University of Delhi