

Identity Of A Nurse

Working Women and Health Problems

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Mrs. Simmerjit Bhullar, General Secretary, Nurses' Welfare Association (PGI), Chandigarh, attended the 4th World Conference of N.G.O.s' Forum on Women from August 31-September 8, 1995 at Huairou, China. She was one of the six representatives who attended the Conference from the Union Territory of Chandigarh. The paper presented by her is given below:

I FEEL that a woman can better know and understand the problems of women than anyone else. Being a Nurse by profession and employed in a prestigious Institute of international fame at Chandigarh (India) since 1970, I had a long association with the Working Women of Medical, Administrative Services, Paramedicals, Telephone Operators, Teachers, Ward Servants, Ministerials, Receptionists, etc. Being an active Trade Unionist I had a number of opportunities to meet the various women politicians including Ministers and representatives of voluntary organisations and few lower rung policewomen. The problems faced by working women in the so called man's dominating society are more or so identical.

My experience with the abovesaid categories of working women brings me to a conclusion that women want to serve the Institutions and not the persons which is expected of them. The lack of encouragement and faith for entrusting the higher responsibilities to women led to inferiority complex and loss of confidence. It will be wrong to suggest that the working women can not execute a task more effectively and effi-

ciently than their men counterparts. It has been accepted in principle throughout the globe that the working women are more sincere, loyal, honest and keep more secrecy of the official matters than their male counterparts. The working woman is striving hard to bridge up the centuries-old gap between the man and the so called woman's sphere of work. As to Indian conditions there is no sex bar in theory and practice. Many top posts are filled by women in various spheres of life.

The other problems faced are slightly different from profession to profession: The problems of creches near the working place, frequent transfers, shift duties including night duties, accommodation far from the working place, plight of local buses and trains, place of posting at different station than the husband, wife and husband on different shifts, etc. The working women can not take proper rest after performing night duties as compared to their men counterparts because of their social obligation towards the family and children. I will not hesitate to add that only the wearer knows where the shoe pinches. Playing the role of "earner" and "house-

hold manager" (should be substituted by "Home Maker") at the same time is not a bed of roses.

The Sacrifices

Working woman does not mean the employed one only but the majority of women work hard to earn their livelihood as a housewife. Women are working shoulder to shoulder with their men counterparts to uplift the societies, communities and nations. However, the woman has to make a lot of sacrifices and make the fire still burning in her house and at the same time to keep it a warm and happy home. It is only after marriage and that too after motherhood that the real conflict starts for working women. The more so when there is no one to see the child at home. Being educated the conscience of working women pricks her because she is not fully attentive to the physical and mental development of her child. Therefore, the provision of creches and nursery schools near the working place is a must. Sometime rift between a working woman and her husband due to the problems explained earlier lead to marital disharmony and result in divorce.

Some time the matters come to suicide. The average life span of a woman in the developing countries and particularly of a working woman tends to be lower than that of men mainly as a result of greater health hazards.

The wealth of a nation depends on the health of the women. Unfortunately, the society has imposed various obligations on women which multiply the hardships of working women further. The problems faced by working women badly affect their health causing mental strain, depression, fatigue, malnutrition, still birth, threatened abortions, etc. The researches conducted on working women have proved that the hormonal changes have some influence on the relationship between body fatness, body fat distribution and blood pressure. In certain working conditions the congenital malformations in children of working women have been found. The studies conducted among female hospital workers have shown that the strenuous working conditions cause musculoskeletal disorders. If women are burdened with ill health the expectations of improvement or upliftment of society can not be made. How can they educate their families and thus communities and nations. The socio-economic ramifications are far reaching. The responsibility of pursuing women's health and welfare must be borne by all sections of our society. The Nurses are taking special responsibilities in these regards. They are creating awareness among women through community services regarding proper Immunization, Nutrition, Family Planning and such other areas to build a strong and healthy society. The health

status of women must be the one of the most sensitive parameters of progress in social development.

The States must give due considerations to the needs of working women. The Maternity Benefit Acts should be amended to enhance the benefits. The maternity leave to the working women should be enhanced to one year to regain the dissipated energy. The pledge of Health for All, literacy and elimination of poverty can only be achieved if the health con-

ditions of women are given due consideration. The role of women in achieving the goals set by various States in Agriculture, Education, Population Control, Health Services, etc., can not be ignored. It is the need of the hour to give serious thought to the problems faced by working women throughout the world to continue their support in a more effective manner for a better tomorrow.

Thank you and Namaskar!

Nursing as a Profession

by Arati Chettri

Nursing is a profession,
it is a delightful vocation,
So, let us sum up its value,
On this wonderful occasion.

Nursing is a profession,
which needs sense of dedication,
Denotes the skill of verification,
In each and every direction.

Nurses should possess patience,
while caring for the patients,
They should look upon their profession,
As the highest of all vocation(s).

Nursing is Giving direction
to the disease recognition
to prevent infection
which helps in good health promotion.

Nursing is wide range of activities,
which promotes the health of communities,
Nursing needs fulfilment of some criteria,
it should reach all areas.

In this profession,
Word "POISE" is of great concern,
which indicates control over emotions,
Thoughtfulness, skillfulness in action.

So let us together take responsibilities,
And expose our qualities,
Make use of our abilities,
Perform faithful duties (and)
Keep above the profession's purity.

So,
Nursing is a profession,
It is a wonderful vocation,
And I've summed up its values,
In the above quotations.