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## **MOONLIGHTING PATTERNS AND GENDER: IMPLICATIONS FOR ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Moonlighting is an intriguing topic when it comes to human behaviour within organisations. The extensive literature on this field emphasises the relevance of this phenomenon. While abundant research in this field exists, most of them are similar in methodology and focus solely on moonlighting and its aspirational and deprivational aspects. This article aims to critically analyse the gender-based difference in moonlighting intentions and their alignment with sustainable development goals. The methodology used is qualitative literature review. There are significant differences in moonlighting patterns among males and females. The married men and unmarried women tend to moonlight more when compared to unmarried men and married women. Women's moonlighting is often tied with informal caregiving responsibilities, leading to poverty based on both economy and time. The study explores intersection of gender and moonlighting behavior, highlighting its implications on sustainable development goals. The study states that the sustainable development goals related to gender and social inclusivity should address the challenges faced by women in the labour market for building a more equitable and sustainable economic environment.

**KEYWORDS:** Moonlighting, Gender, SDG 8, SDG 5, SDG 10

### **INTRODUCTION**

The term "moonlighting" originated 1880's and refers to Irish gangs who committed night theft and burglary in rural areas and were known as Moonlighters (Mahankal, et al., 2023). The term itself is given a pejorative meaning this is because it is evident that people working a second job are called moonlighters from an incident of the burglary of an Irish gang. The perception of moonlighting was also mostly negative. Moonlighting gained popularity in America when people started taking up a second job along with their primary job (Mahankal et, 2023). The curiosity regarding this behavior along with the negative meaning attached to it has been studied by different researchers from the

1960's. The early literatures are found to be analyzing the deprivation aspect of multiple job holding whereas when it comes to recent times, we can find the positive aspects of it has more focused and analysed. The seminal article by Wilensky was published in the 1960s and this concept and associated literature has undergone several changes since then. The period of the study, the area of study, and the technological and societal changes have a significant impact on the moonlighting pattern. For example, Wilensky (1963) has assumed multiple job holders are primarily driven to work multiple jobs for financial or career-related reasons. He looked at the deprivation aspect without even considering the positive or the enrichment aspect of it. Wilensky (1963) also states that people with a chaotic work history, people with blocked mobility in their career, and subjective deprivation are more likely to moonlight and hence the best predictors of moonlighting.

The term moonlighting has been amplified post-COVID-19 and people started to take second jobs. In the Mid -1950s the term meant someone who takes a second job referring to a person who works under the light of the moon.

Gender is said as one of the areas with more research scope according to the seminal article of Campion et al. In the introduction of this review, we have already mentioned how Wilensky has argued that historically males have higher moonlighting rates when compared with females (Campion et al., 2020) and but the study of Kimmel & Conway (2001) states that in Canada 5.31% of females moonlight over 4.82% of males. In the same study, the moonlighting rate of females to males in the US is 5.34% vs. 6.56 % (Kimmel & Conway, 2001). The rate of female moonlighters though slightly higher than males is extremely different from what Wilensky argued. Additionally, Rexhaj et al. (2023) has provided insights about the caregiving role which is primarily instilled in women and the possible time poverty they face. Thus it is clear that there is a correlation between moonlighting and gender.

Sustainable development goals (SDGs) were introduced by United Nations in 2015. There are 17 SDGs adopted by all the member nations which are to be attained by 2030. Among the various SDGs the most relevant SDGs with respect to gender and employment are- SDG 5 (Gender equality), SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities). This paper analyses the differences between the moonlighting patterns among men and women and its implications towards a sustainable and inclusive labour market through the lens of SDG 5, 8 and 10.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Researchers identified several demographic and social factors related to moonlighting.; one of the important aspects being the gender aspect in moonlighting. Men were found to be more likely to engage in moonlighting than women (Allen, 1998., Pearson et al., 1994), particularly for specific occupations like teaching (Bett, 2004), law enforcement (McKenzie, 2017), and self-employment

(Nelson,1999). However, during times of economic distress women were likely to hold onto multiple jobs (Kumar & Chaturvedi, 2017). Magadley (2021) study among academicians reported gender differences about reasons for taking up multiple jobs. For males, the major reason was financial in nature whereas for females it was related to intrinsic reasons like self-fulfillment.

Kimmel and Conway (2001) study also found a strong relationship between marital status and moonlighting. Wilensky (1963) noted that married men moonlight more than bachelors; and employed, single women more than other females. It is quite intriguing to note that two studies conducted in the US within a gap of 40 years gave similar results that both married males and unmarried males moonlight. This sheds light on how significant marital status is when it comes to moonlighting.

It is observed that the number of children in the family affects the moonlighting behavior among the males and females. It is seen that the number of children has positive effects on the male in the family and a negative effect on women in the family to get a second job for financial reasons (Dickey et al., 2011). It is also seen that the presence of young children (0-5 age) is associated with less moonlighting among married females (Kimmel & Conway, 2001). The males with young children are more likely to moonlight and the males with young children are more likely to moonlight. To conclude, unmarried females and married males are more likely to moonlight according to this study (Kimmel & Conway, 2001).

Some studies have looked into factors of familial and marital status and the trends of moonlighting. There are some interesting results when we look into these studies and Dickey et. al. (2011) study among UK offshore workers found a relationship between moonlighting behavior and working spouses. It was discovered that people with a working spouse are less likely to get a second job for financial reasons

A study by Ashwini et al. (2017) examined the drivers of multiple-job holding and its association with the demographic profile of IT professionals. The study found that the number of family members, the difference between single and married employees, and the work experience of the employees are found to be major intentions to moonlight. The study also reported that there is no significant difference between the type of second job (moonlighting) and annual income, or marital status, except for the number of members in the family.

Individuals in their early adult life are more likely to get a second job for financial reasons and as they progress in life, they increasingly become more likely to get a second job for its non-pecuniary aspects (Dickey et al., 2011). Kimmel and Conway (2001) advocated that in Canada the younger age group (17-24) is at its peak of moonlighting whereas in the US the middle-aged (25-44) age group is at its peak of moonlighting. In the study of Wilensky (1963), the 25-35-year group stands out in the age

distribution because they are in the stage of the family life cycle most full of strain. With respect to work experience, it was observed that the more experienced individuals are in the labor market, the more likely they are to moonlight for financial reasons rather than other motives related to heterogeneous jobs. Individuals with prior history of working multiple jobs were also found to have a higher propensity for moonlighting (Nunoo et al., 2018). Kimmel & Conway (2001) study also looked into the educational background of moonlighters and found that educated workers are more likely to moonlight.

### **1.1 Sustainable Development - Goal 5 and moonlighting**

Sustainable development goal 5 emphasizes on achieving gender equality. The literature has clearly indicated the gender inequalities in terms of moonlighting behaviour among employees. Rexhaj et al. (2023) has highlighted the aspect of informal caregiving among women and the possible time poverty which it induces. This is definitely due to the social expectations and gender roles society dictates. As discussed above, unmarried females and married males are more likely to moonlight and the males with young children are more likely to moonlight. Rexhaj et al. (2023) study states that primary informal caregiving lies on women, this not only causes the women's work to go unrecognized but also reduces their participation in the formal workforce (Kimmel & Conway, 2001; Rexhaj et al., 2023). This creates “poverty of time” as they do multiple roles simultaneously such as household works, caregiving as well as their professional commitments which creates a poverty of time, this impacts significantly on women’s wellbeing and mental health as the data shows that 51.2% of female informal caregivers and 38.6% of male informal caregivers are depressed (Rexhaj et al., 2023). This not only increases stress among women and reduces their opportunities in the global workforce. To make this align with the sustainable development goal no. 5, the state can introduce child caring service support institutions, special leave policies for caregivers and other policies which can help females to relieve their caregiving duties. This can enhance the sustainable development goal number 5. The normalisation of moonlighting without conflict-of-interest policy, can also improve the chances of women to participate in the formal workforce.

### **1.2 Sustainable Development - Goal 8 and moonlighting**

Sustainable development goal 8 is to promote inclusive, sustained and sustainable productivity, economic growth and providing employment for all. This is especially relevant when it comes to the changing dynamics in job contracts and evolving job markets, the moonlighting and the Sustainable development goal (SDG) no.8 is relevant when it comes to gender dynamics. Averett (2001) has described that for women it is particularly difficult to advance in their career because of the unequal access to education and opportunities which significantly impact their earning potential. As Rexhaj et al. (2023) stated the primary caregiving responsibility also lies on women. All these together put women in a position where they are not able to contribute to the larger economic development.

Averett (2001) highlights that in 1989, 43% of multiple job holders were women, this shows that women are increasingly participating in moonlighting. Female moonlighters engage in part time job sectors such as technical sales, administrative support whereas men mostly hold full time jobs along with their part time jobs. Another interesting finding of Averett (2001) is that a skewed data is found when the income reported among men and women is considered. He claims that men who are engaged in moonlighting are less likely to report their income whereas women have different reasons for moonlighting and it does not vary when it comes to income reporting (Averett, 2001). These discrepancies show that there is a significant difference in men and women moonlighting behaviours. The paper highlights the need for policies that address the challenges faced by women in the economic market and addressing them is crucial when it comes to SDG no.8 to be effective.

### **1.3 Sustainable Development - Goal 10 and moonlighting**

SDG 10 focuses on reducing inequalities. Researchers have also identified several demographic and social factors related to moonlighting. Men were found to be more likely to engage in moonlighting than women (Pearson et al.,1994), particularly for specific occupations like teaching (Betts,2004), law enforcement (Mckenzie, 2017), and self-employment (Nelson,1999). However, during times of economic distress women were likely to hold onto multiple jobs (Kumar & Chaturvedi, 2017).

This shows that the restrictions society insists on women, restricts their opportunities and puts them in an economically disadvantaged position. This is evident from the marital status of women and moonlighting pattern is analysed as discussed above. Reducing these disparities and building a sustainable development can be done only through targeted interventions and implementation of shared caregiving methods.

## **CONCLUSION**

Moonlighting is an emerging trend and essentially evolving with the changing labour market. It is important from a perspective of equity and sustainability that both genders should equally get opportunity to participate in the labour market but through this study it can be concluded that married men and unmarried women are more likely to engage in moonlighting compared to their counterparts. The marital status and familial roles like informal caregiving influencing the gender roles in moonlighting is significant. The informal caregiving role is burdening women with the double burden of economic and time poverty. These disparities in gender and their understanding remain crucial when it comes to achieving sustainable development goals. The sustainable development goals related to gender and social inclusivity should address the challenges faced by women in the labour market for building a more equitable and sustainable economic environment.

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