

Unguarded and unfavorable atmosphere for the immigrant women workers

Dear Editor:

It is a fact that owing to the increased life expectancy and a simultaneous increase in the incidence of lifestyle diseases in developed & middle income nations, the number of females employed as a labor force for discharging health care is significantly increasing [1-2]. In-fact, across the world, a large number of women have entered the workforce and a major proportion of them are immigrants [1]. These women more often than not are working in private & informal settings without having any access to social protection or legal rights [3]. This indeed is a paradoxical situation, wherein the migrant women are supporting the shortfalls in health care delivery (viz. child care, long-term care, etc.) while their own rights to health & other welfare measures are compromised [2].

On analyzing the situation, most of these women have not been successful in getting a job in health care establishments and in an attempt to run their family, these women have consented to work in informal settings [2-3]. This compromise has eventually deprived them of their fundamental rights, including pension and other additional benefits [2]. Further, owing to the variability in the immigration laws in different nations, such women fail to get a legal employment [3]. This even results in making them extremely vulnerable to abuse by the employers and exposure to hazardous working conditions [1-2].

Moreover, a significant impact on the physical and mental health status of these migrant women workers has been observed [2]. In addition, these women are extremely vulnerable for injuries, burns, infectious diseases, physical or sexual

violence [2-3]. Further, owing to the inability to avail the benefits of health insurance scheme in the migrated nation, they are often unable to access health care services [3]. Considering all these factors, there is an immense need to empower migrant communities, strengthen social networks and deal with problems of loneliness & susceptibility to various diseases [2]. Simultaneously, there is a need to take measures to minimize occupational health hazards and social exclusion [2-3].

Further, interventions have to be taken to deal with the existing barriers preventing labor involvement and at the same time, more culturally sound accessible health services should be delivered [1-2]. In addition, better housing and social welfare measures should be made available to the immigrant women [2]. Also, at the national level, appropriate and comprehensive policies should be formulated to improve the health of migrant women and all the concerned sectors should be involved [2]. Moreover, measures have to be taken to improve the quality of the obtained information pertaining to health standards of these migrant women, as it is grossly incomplete [2-3]. In-fact, based on the comprehensive information, corrective measures can be planned and implemented [3].

In conclusion, it is high time that the national government should take concerted efforts to protect and improve the health and welfare standards of the migrant women.

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