

Moonlighting— Balancing the Dynamics of Services Sector

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Abstract— *The paper is aimed at understanding the concept of moonlighting in the Indian setting. Moonlighting refers to taking up an additional source of employment apart from the primary one. It is a situation when an employee has taken up multiple engagements at a time. The focus has been specified to service sector, where two areas of operations of have been critically examined. The first is the education, where the current position of moonlighting practice has been observed through school teachers, university teachers and scholars who take up additional classes. The second is the area of healthcare where doctors and health practitioners who take up extra commitments beyond their primary one are analyzed. Further, the legal and ethical framework behind the practice is analyzed through establishment acts; Factories Act etc to check the legality of dual employment. Moving ahead with the paper, certain challenges that contribute to the practice and come along with moonlighting are observed from the point of view of moonlighting employees. The theoretical study is concluded through suggesting measures to uplift the position of moonlighters in the sector to create proper balance in the organisation and maintain harmonious relationship between the employer and the employees.*

Indexed Terms— *Moonlighting, Dual Employment, Service Sector, Job Satisfaction, Employee Loyalty.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Moonlighting, also known as dual job holding or multiple jobs holding, is a practice of working for two or more jobs at a time. It is a condition when an employee is taking up an additional job beyond his/her primary source of employment. The employee takes upon additional duties and responsibilities from

a different employer after his/ her primary work hours. Historically, the idea of holding of a secondary job was associated with working at nights, and hence, that is the fact behind calling the practice as moonlighting. With the growing competitiveness amidst the industries, layoffs and retrenchments have become the new common in response to downsizing and restructuring to match the pace of the industry or to withstand losses. “The volatility of modern job markets has been forcing a significant number of workers to develop an energetic strategy of holding multiple jobs or moonlighting to cope” (Dr. A S George, A S Hovan George, 2022). [1] The scenario led to apostasy of employer employee trust to a considerable extent. As a result, this distrust led to employees seeking job security, and most importantly financial security beyond their primary employment sources. “Employees should no longer expect job security and career progression within the same company and must themselves take up the responsibility for their growth and future employability” (Holbeche,2015). [2]

The situation accelerated with the outbreak of COVID 19, as the job security within organisation became questionable. People went down from holding advanced positions in a company to straight unemployed over night. Another situation that led to the growth of moonlighting is the remote work options. Remote working, commonly known as work-from-home, is a scenario within which the employer and employee do not need to meet up at a common place, rather connect and work online. As said by (Abolghasem Nadrei,2003) “ Economist explain that individuals take a second job in addition to their primary job as the employer does not offers enough hours to the employee on the primary job”. [3] The space for leisure thus created a need to perform and earn over and above their primary engagements and as

a result people started taking extra jobs for financial security, optimum utilisation of their potential, talent development, career progression, network building etc. The present scenario of employment reflects least dependency of employee and employer upon each other, which itself justifies the relying of employees on additional job sources. However, the practice is highly criticised and popularly proclaimed as an offensive act in regards to the ethics and loyalty towards the organisation. Although if analysed from the employee point of view, moonlighting is not just confined to providing financial security to them whenever recession hits, apart from it there are multiple benefits that can be observed, yet the organisations are seemed to be harmed by equal number of risks. “Although moonlighting is an attractive option for the employees because it helps them achieve a career, growth and additional income, employers are concerned about company information and the risk that the employees may not be able to give their all”(Monika Gulati,2023).[4] The paper further focuses on analysing the impact of moonlighting along with understanding the available provisions to defend or condemn the practice.

Moonlighting has unfolded its dimensions in various sectors of India including tertiary sector. Tertiary sector, often known as service sector encompasses delivering intangible services and values to customer such as medical providers, education, hospitality and IT etc. The service sector contributes over 50% to India’s GDP, administering about 30.7% of the total Human Resource of the country. The sector witnesses the maximum rate of attrition when compared to allied and industrial sector. Employees working within the tertiary sector happen to be more enlightened about their satisfaction level, competency growth and career progression within the industry and thus it justifies why moonlighting can be easily detected within this sector.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dr A Shaji George and A S Hovan George (2022) in their research paper “A Review of Moonlighting in the IT Sector and Its Impact” referred to moonlighting as a coping mechanism for market volatility. The study revolved around the effect of moonlighting in IT sector along with the relationship patterns between the main

job and the secondary job. The paper also stated that in certain cases the primary job acts as a shock absorber to the business venture fails, if they are starting to invest in their new business. [1]

Holbeche (2015) argues that the new emerging psychological contract between employees and employer depict no commitment between the two parties. The study further states that now job security and career progression is no longer the concern of the employer. The employees have to themselves take up the responsibility of their career progression as well as future employability. Only those employees have chances of sustaining in the organisation who are exceptionally talented and have the ability to survive in the uncertain, complex and flexible work environment. [2]

Abolghasem Nadrei (2003) in his paper “Determinants of Moonlighting Rate in Iranian Labour Market” explains the hours constraints model of moonlighting, which highlights the reasons behind moonlighting as the unavailability of enough desired work hours on the primary job. [3]

Monika Gulati(2023) has discussed about the ethical and legal issues behind practicing moonlighting in India. [4]

Georges Mumbere Kisvano et. al.(2017), explores the case study of Congolese Christian University and explain the growing phenomenon of moonlighting among professors. He has covered the financial reasons for the same, and suggests that moonlighting occurs as a financial hedging mechanism against the uncertainty of future. The study also covers the impact of moonlighting of professors over the quality of education and effect on human resource management. The study focuses on the positive impact of moonlighting in raising the standard of living of the professors. Moreover it provides wide range of opportunities to enhance their income. However it covers disadvantages of the practice also. [5]

Dr. Luxmi Malodia et al (2023) has covered the situation of moonlighting in tricity. Also, the paper shows that job satisfaction considerably and negatively impacts and influences peoples motive behind doing their job. [6]

Pholeng Chue(2007) has highlighted the very common practice of public health sector employees running their private clinics stating that moonlighting is not a new practice and has been common since ages. [7]

Shweta Sangwan (2014) in her paper has discussed about the need for moonlighting by employees and its implications for managers. Moreover, the paper also briefs out various ethical issues faced by employees who moonlight. The paper highlights both pros and cons of moonlighting for both employer and the employees and also draws out legal issues that are involved into it. [8]

S. Kumaresh & Dr. A. Bhooma Devi(2020) in their paper “An empirical investigation of moonlighting practices and its implications” discussed the relationship between moonlighting and job satisfaction. The study also reflects that the pay rate provided by the companies is not providing appropriate level of job satisfaction. [9]

Kaukab Ara et al (2016) I the paper, has discussed about the moonlighting practice in teaching profession. An analytical study has been done to understand the relationship between moonlighting and job satisfaction among the university teachers. [10]

Husain (2014) in his paper “Essays on multiple job holding across local labor market” has defined moonlighting as having a second job, part time or full time job, the job may or may not be in the same line as first one. [11]

Raffel and Groff (1990) found that the more a teacher is in the role of a breadwinner, the more likely he or she is to moonlight. They found that the major reasons for moonlighting were financial factors. [12]

Rohini Nikam et. al. (2023) in the paper, has discussed about the impact that moonlighting has on organisation’s growth and effectiveness. [13]

III. OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the position of moonlighters in service sector.

2. To study the ethical and legal framework of moonlighting in India.
3. To analyze the Challenges faced by moonlighters.
4. To identify measures to uplift the position of moonlighting workers in India.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The paper follows a theoretical approach. It remains qualitative in nature and so descriptive methodology is used to make the study more convenient for research. The paper includes an analysis of different fields within the tertiary sector.

All the data taken into account are secondary in nature. A deep analysis of laws and rules regulating the practice have been observed through different research papers, articles, journal, internet for different laws and acts, websites of different companies for their internal policies and code of conduct governing the act of moonlighting, has been done.

V. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The service sector is the third tier of India’s three tier economy. It deals with the production of intangible products and deals in areas such as education, health, hospitality, transportation, advertising, cinemas etc. The sector contributes almost 57% of GVA and 50% to the country’s GDP and has also witnessed a rise of 9.1% in FY24. It also prompts almost half of the total jobs created in the country. [14]

To study the position of moonlighters in service sector, two main areas of education and healthcare of the sector have been theoretically studied—

Education— the educators are said to hold the maximum proportion of moonlighters in India. As observed, there are several high school teachers, lecturers, university professors, who apart from their primary teaching organisation, are working for private coaching centers, either in their owned ones or as a part time employee of private coaching institutes. The acceptance of a secondary job by the educators generally denotes their financial and social standing. Usually the reasons behind the practice are-first, the feeling of being underpaid has always been a cause of declined job satisfaction. If the teachers feel they are

not paid enough for their efforts, they seek for additional sources of income. Second, the urge to utilize the maximum potential of oneself leads to taking up of additional tasks. Third, mostly university professors focus on additional jobs to widen up their area of specialization. Fourth, for those working in private institutions takes up additional source of earning because of job insecurity.

Healthcare— public sector healthcare employees working at their private clinic has always been a common practice in India. There can be number of reasons highlighted for the aforesaid practice. First, being the financial upliftment. Second, being skill development and experience. Further, more reasons such professional training, gaining networks, social welfare motives, market goodwill can be highlighted.

		Mean	Std. deviation
1.	I feel insecure about my position in my current job.	2.70	1.209
2.	I feel that the overall scenario in my field is not good.	2.45	1.083
3.	I fear I may be sacked anytime	2.56	1.117
4.	Organizational changes are drastic	2.41	1.148
5.	Value of my job is declining	3.40	1.069
6.	I'm unnecessarily warned/penalized in my job	3.49	1.123
7.	have more competition for my job	3.86	1.099
8.	The income I earn is not enough to meet the needs	2.09	1.145
9.	My organization knows that I am moonlighting	3.79	1.195
10.	I am the single earning member of my family	2.46	1.298
11.	I strongly believe in plan B of career.	4.17	1.039

12.	The requirements in the society are more than my earnings	2.14	1.332
13.	In the present scenario one, it is difficult to survive with one income	2.47	1.356
14.	At times I feel that I deviate work ethics	3.85	1.188
15.	I take my job for granted and do a moonlight	3.74	1.228

Table 1

Source: [15]

While in case of private sector healthcare employees, it has been observed from the given table that job insecurity or having a plan B for career is the prime reason for moonlighting among them. However, competition in the field, deviation from the work ethics and being penalized at work are also the prime reasons that are detected from the survey.

The legal and ethical framework behind moonlighting—

The concept of moonlighting has no where been defined in any Indian law and thus no restriction has been expressly made in regards to dual job holding. However, there are certain statutory provisions that restrict the practice.

Factories act, 1948 clearly prohibits dual working in its section 60 and states that “no adult worker shall be required or allowed to work in any factory on any day on which he has already been working in any other factory, save in such circumstances as may be prescribed.” [16]

Delhi shops and establishment act, 1954 discusses double employment in its section 9 as, “no person shall work about the business of an establishment or two or more establishment and a factory in excess of the period during which he may be lawfully employed under this act.” [17]

The Bombay shops and establishment act, 1948 in its section 65 discusses, no employee shall work in any establishment, nor shall any employer knowingly permit an employee to work in any establishment, on a day on which the employee is given a holiday or is on leave in accordance with the provisions of this act.” [18]

Section 8 under Schedule I-B of the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Central Rules, 1946, states that “a workman cannot work against the interest of an industrial establishment by taking dual employment in addition to their existing job.” [19]

The Clause 22 of the draft Model Standing Orders for Service Sector, 2020, specifies the practice of additional employment as, “a workman is expected to refrain from working against the interest of the establishment in which he is employed and shall not take up any other employment that may adversely impact the interests of his employer. However, a worker may take up additional employment, with or without conditions, after obtaining the necessary permission from his employer.” [20]

Under rule 6, sub-rule 8 of the West Bengal Clinical Establishments (Registration, Regulation and Transparency) Rules, 2017, no clinical establishment shall engage or empanel any person already engaged by the government of West Bengal, or allow such person to render any health care service who is yet to obtain express permission in the form of a 'no-objection certificate' from the government," states a memo addressed to private health care institutes. [21] The provision restricts the act of dual job holding. However, the constitution has no specific law to condemn the act of taking up additional employment. Thus, it can be withdrawn that the workers can hold up a secondary job only if the industry and company policy allows it and the details of the same have been disclosed to the employer.

Challenges faced by the moonlighters—

The employees taking up additional job most importantly face the problem in work life balancing. It is difficult to extract leisure hours for oneself and family because of being committed for prolonged working hours. Although the employee is gaining the benefits of strong networking through holding

multiple jobs, the social life of the employee gets affected because of limited or no time to offer to social circles.

There is always a fear of being charged upon for conducting unethical practice, as most companies hold policies against dual job holding. While some companies like Swiggy hold a lenient attitude towards moonlighting, there are also companies like Infosys which consider the act as highly unethical.

Working for two jobs simultaneously, weakens the individual productivity at either of the jobs. The employees are expected to perform efficiently by each employer and in order to match up the benchmarks sorted for them; they mostly remain physically and mentally exhausted most of the time. Ultimately, the productivity of the employee declines gradually and they struggle to match up the requirements of their jobs and perform outstandingly on any of the jobs.

Most of the moonlighters take up additional job to fulfill their financial requirements. However, when working on two or more jobs, it becomes difficult to prioritize one job over the other. Resultantly, when the situation arises of sporadic emergency in one job, it creates a predicament of prioritizing one job over the other.

Time management is yet another alarming challenge for the moonlighters. A primary job in itself is highly involving, and taking up additional commitments makes it even more difficult to manage time.

VI. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the above stated literature review it can be concluded that there are a number of monetary and non monetary factors behind people taking up additional commitments, but practicing moonlighting in itself is a challenging task. If these factors are controlled and the situations at the primary workplace are aligned with the requirements of the employees, the issue can be regulated and the position of moonlighting workers can be uplifted.

Some of the measures to regulate moonlighting and uplift the position of moonlighters in India are—

Each company have their own perception regarding the practice and thus it should not be the laws of the country that must restrict or encourage the practice, but the company policy that should have clarified statements in this regard.

The employers must identify the needs of the employees. Taking the reference of Herzberg's two factor theory, it can be stated that the employers should not only focus on hygiene factors. The recognition and fulfillment of motivation factors must be highly encouraged to earn employee loyalty towards the organisation.

Equal importance should be given to both monetary and non monetary benefits such as awards and recognition, participation in management, job security, appropriate work environment, healthy work culture etc.

CONCLUSION

Moonlighting is exposed to divergent perception. Both the employer and employee have different approaches to view moonlighting. Where on one side employees tend to seek job satisfaction, financial security, growth and networking in their secondary jobs, on the other hand the employer has its own concept of the cons arising out of the practice. Issues of data privacy, utilization of own resource for other use, exhausted and under productive employees is what usually employers think about moonlighting. The core issue behind the entire discord is no clear conversation from either of the parties. Most of the companies have no clear policy in this regard. No appropriate feedback and single sided communication are the major reasons behind it. The paper concludes that the service sector is witnessing moonlighting in most of its area of operation, and if appropriate measures are not taken, the situation will start unfolding its incalculable dimensions.

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