

Title: Moonlighting the Dark Side of Flexibility

Abstract

With the changes in the global environment and remote working conditions, some workers have begun moonlighting (Hamersma S, 2014), working secondary jobs either to make ends meet or to earn little extra income given their set of priorities and family income. Recent years have seen a rapid increase in work-from-home jobs, multiple job holdings, and flexible working hours with the growing concern over the efficiency of moonlighters. This study focuses on explaining the dark side of flexibility, wherein the concept of moonlighting is accepted within the given framework of Indian labor laws, KPMG reports on flexible working hours and organizational HR policies and framework (Hirsch, 2016). The study attempts to answer questions on employees being allowed to take other assignments without knowledge of the current employer to fulfill their income needs and how an organization can support the employee to not take additional assignments and support the employee economically.

Introduction

“Moonlighting” may be defined as the practice of working for another organization while committing oneself to one company as the primary workplace typically without the employer’s knowledge (KPMG, 2022).

Moonlighting has been understood as the new way of working where the employee is paid for additional pay, he receives from working in an organization where he is not full-time employed. (KPMG, 2022) has segregated moonlighting into two categories conflicted and non-conflicted. Conflicted means doing all such actions which involve violating time, ethics, or code of conduct commitments between employer and employee, and conflict of interest in the two organizations. Non-conflicting means minimizing zero overlaps of commitments between two organizations (Hirsch, 2016). associated moonlighting as when an individual hold multiple job holding during his work week, whereas his primary job typically holds those actual working hours. It is very necessary that to be counted as multiple job holding, the individual primary or secondary job must be a fixed wage or salaried job. The concept of moonlighting has been understood from various perspectives such as multiple job holding, conflict of interest, (Tiwari, 2014) secretly doing one job, earning additional income, etc. for our study purpose the meaning of moonlighting concept is when an individual is involved in a job secretly and typically at night without informing its current employer and is getting paid for that additional task is considered as moonlighting.

Literature review

As per the (Statistics, 2022) Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports from mid-2010 to 2020, there was a boom in moonlighting concept ranging from 4.5% to 5.7% (Hamel, 1999); (Perrella, 1970), due to the low income of people and growing needs of the family were seen. For almost a decade the rate of moonlighting fluctuated from 5.2% to 6.6% as per the (Statistics, 2022) BLS report. It was commonly understood during that time that an individual having a second job in addition to a primary job will have conflicting interests in his current organization due to multiple job holdings. Studies in the US market shows that is a huge gender difference in moonlighters with respect to male and female. Female moonlighting patterns have become more like those of males wherein, they have started taking dual jobs in the form of part-time in the evening and full-time as the main job in the regular morning hours. (Anushruti, 2022) tried to form an association between married and single workers. The study tried to form a correlation fit between the income of a family

member and the increase in income if he is engaged in moonlighting activity. It has become imperative for the HR department to pay careful attention to the demographic profile of employees to understand the motivation behind involved into the moonlighting concept. Moreover, the kind of lifestyle people are living along with the growing needs of the family and societal status, moonlighting has become a very common phenomenon (Company, 2022). Moonlighters tend to come from both low-income, medium income and high-income groups as well. (S. Sagayarajan, 2019) tried to study that those with bottom income tend to do additional packaging jobs to compensate for their family income, whereas those with middle income tend to achieve a higher standard of living. The only newness observed in the high-income group was these were those groups of people who feared getting fired from their respective jobs, so found an alternative to working as moonlighters in case they lose their current job, they at least have one alternative in place.

Another interesting theory has been studied by (Healy, 2017) who has associated moonlighting concept with legal issues involved in having dual jobs with dual incomes as well. Researchers tried to study the relationship between employer-employee, HR policies and practices, and systems prevalent in the company (Healy, 2017). The study investigated that job satisfaction has a huge impact on moonlighting especially when it comes to promotions, increments, employment engagement, and so on. Indian laws do not defile moonlighting (Sverke, 2002). Even the factories act of (1948) restricts an employer from allowing to work in two places or in two organizations at a given point in time. The restriction under the Occupational Safety, Health, and Working Conditions (OSH) Code is broadly like the one prescribed under the Factories Act and is limited to dual employment in a mine or factory. Industrial Relations (IR) Code contains a similar restriction; however, the employer may, at their discretion, permit the worker to take up an additional job or assignment with or without conditions (Healy, 2017)

Moonlighting per se is not necessarily a negative or unprofessional activity (Jeffrey A. Raffel, 1990) and thus it is inappropriate to ask an employee about the thought of indulging in the activities associated with moonlighting. Employees report, however, family and social activities (Katz, 2016) are the most affected aspects of having an extra job, followed by physical wellbeing, (Perrella, 1970), and moral & mental health (Tiwari, 2014). (Healy, 2017) argues that moonlighting also brings some issues such as overworked employees and poor health, business secrecy with the possibility of conflict of interest, inefficiency due to dealing with more than one job, and an ethical dilemma when working for two employers from the same industry. On the positive side, moonlighting has been found to provide the following advantages: increased job mobility (chance of getting a new job), access to a strong network due to being in contact with more people, improved skill sets, and low employee turnover (Sverke, 2002).

Conclusion

The study aimed to understand the concept of moonlighting; why people engage in moonlighting and what our Indian Labor Act describes about this phenomenon. The study showed several reasons for moonlighters being involved in dual income from dual jobs that they are doing. Also, the study tried to clarify various definitions that examine the moonlighting concept. Four main themes emerged from the literature review: job satisfaction, low salary, income levels of people, and joy of earning double income. Making the moonlighting concept effective or encouraging employees into this required lot of changes in the organization's systems, policies, and practices. Moonlighting warrants the attention of organization scholars because it provides workers with an alternative source of valuable work-related outcomes such as income, training, and benefits

(Sverke, 2002). It also potentially changes their perceptions, decisions, and behaviors, and may impact their performance, absenteeism, and turnover intentions (Hamel, 1999) at their primary jobs.

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