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## Problems Faced by Working Women in Service Sector, Ernakulam District-Kerala

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### ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

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*Challenges, working women, workforce*

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### ABSTRACT

This research investigates the challenges encountered by working women in the service sector within Ernakulam District, Kerala, with a focus on Kanjoor Grama Panchayat. Employing a questionnaire survey supplemented by personal interviews, the study aims to delve into the specific issues faced by this demographic. The population under study comprises working women in Kanjoor Grama Panchayat, with a sample size of 50 selected through simple random sampling. Primary data is gathered through the questionnaire survey and direct personal interviews, while secondary data is sourced from relevant literature, journals, and previous research reports. The study's findings are anticipated to offer insights into the unique obstacles encountered by working women in this sector, contributing to a deeper understanding of gender dynamics in the workforce and potentially informing policy and intervention strategies.

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### Introduction

In contemporary society, the participation of women in the workforce has significantly evolved, reshaping traditional gender roles and contributing to socio-economic development. Particularly in regions like Ernakulam District, Kerala, where societal norms have undergone substantial transformation, the presence of women in the service sector has become increasingly prominent. However, alongside this progress, working women encounter a myriad of challenges that hinder their professional growth and overall well-being. As women increasingly join the workforce, their roles expand beyond the confines of domesticity, marking a significant shift in societal dynamics. Yet, despite

their integral contributions to the economy and society at large, working women continue to grapple with a plethora of obstacles, ranging from gender bias and discrimination to unequal opportunities and work-life balance challenges. Understanding these issues is paramount not only for fostering gender equality but also for enhancing organizational productivity and fostering inclusive workplaces.

Ernakulam District, nestled in the vibrant state of Kerala, provides a compelling backdrop for examining the experiences of working women in the service sector. Kerala's unique socio-cultural landscape, characterized by high literacy rates and progressive social indicators, presents both opportunities and challenges for women's empowerment. Against this backdrop, this research endeavors to uncover the nuanced realities faced by working women in Ernakulam District, offering insights that can inform policy interventions and organizational practices aimed at fostering gender equity and inclusivity. Ultimately, this research endeavors to advance the dialogue on gender equality and empower working women to thrive in the evolving socio-economic landscape of Kerala.

### **Statement of Problem**

Although most Indian women are permitted to work, they nonetheless occasionally run into issues at home and at work. Indian women endure discrimination at work since their male coworkers do not treat them with respect. Another issue that women deal with regarding compensation is gender discrimination. Certain companies pay their female employees less than their male counterparts. They get more stressed as a result, which might cause health issues. One of the hardest issues that working mothers with little children confront is this one. They get more tense as a result and find it harder to focus on their work. Working women are unable to provide their families with the necessary care. The main aim of this study is to identify issues and obstacles that working women encounter.

### **Literature Review**

**Hyder (2009)** In the "Women & Economy" issue, Ms. Bushra Hyder stressed the importance of women's work in society economic progress. Women's achievements are often overlooked and underappreciated. Persuading individuals to choose a career outside the home rarely has favorable outcomes. Working outside the home for money is considered men's dominance, and earning for women is regarded as a dishonor due to cultural and social moral values, among other causes.

**Banu and Gomathi (2014)**, around 30-40 percent of India's 400 million workforce is made up of women. Women working in these areas face numerous challenges, including physical, psychological, and workplace discrimination, which has an impact on both their employment and their family lives. Long working hours, inconsistent shifts, excessive targets, little vacation time, and mental stress, among other factors, contribute to these issues. This article discusses the different health issues that women employees encounter in BPO.

**N. Kousalya (2015)** Every female employee in this field is dealing with a variety of health issues. People have different problems for different causes. Physical and psychological issues that develop during working hours are the primary causes of problems among the sector's workforce. The issue in the IT sector ought to be negotiable. The respondents' occupation in information technology indicates that women's health issues primarily stem from sleep disorders and backaches. Therefore, management needs to move decisively to alter the working hours while paying careful attention to the needs of women employees in particular. Implementing programs that incorporate health education and staff training to prevent and overcome morbidity is necessary.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To find the challenges that working women face in the workplace.
2. To understand the potential solutions to address workplace issues.
3. To Identify the primary reasons for working women to resign from their jobs.

### **Research Methodology**

Primary and secondary data were both used in this investigation. There were fifty respondents in the sample. A significant number of people who live in the Ernakulum district provided primary data. Primary data was obtained using a questionnaire, and secondary data was acquired from relevant websites, journals, and other sources.

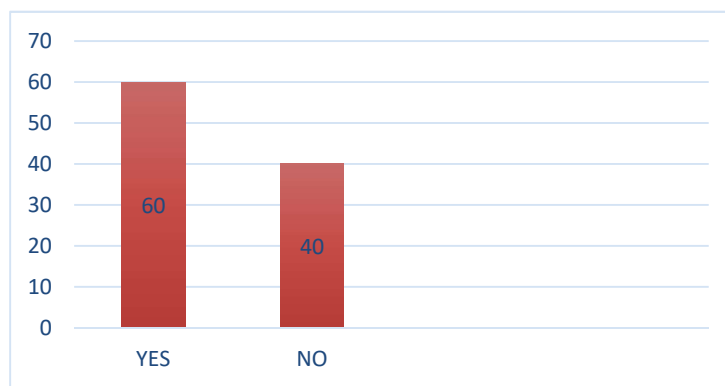
#### **1.Shift done by women workers**

**Table 1 showing work shift done by women workers**

Work Shift Done by Women Workers	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	30	60%
No	20	40%
Total	50	100%

Primary source

**Figure 1 showing work shift done by women workers**



**INTERPRETATION**

It is observed from the survey that, 60% of women are work on shift. And the 40% of women employees do not work on shift basis.

**2. Problems faced by women working on shift duty**

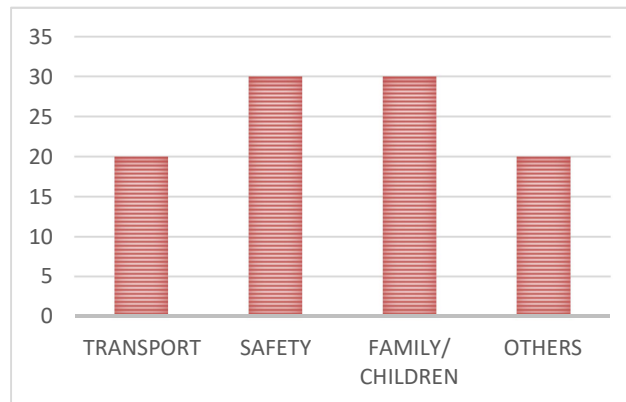
**Table 2 showing problems faced by women employees working on shift duty**

Problems	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Transport	10	20
safety	15	30
Family/ children	15	30

others	10	20
Total	50	100

**Primary source**

**Figure 2 showing problems faced by a women employee working on shift duty**



**INTERPRETATION**

It is observed from the survey that, women are suffering a lot of problems while working in shift duty. Out of 50 people most of them are facing the problem of safety. And the second problem is transportation problem. And 20% of them are facing other problems.

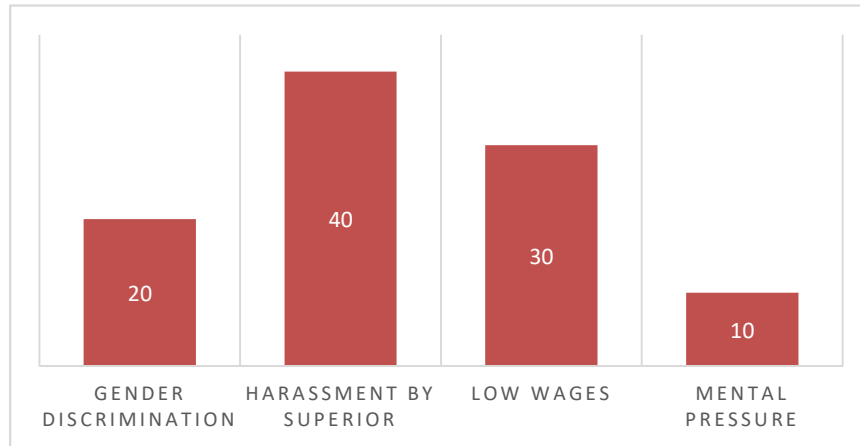
**3.Problems faced by women workers in an organization**

**Table 3 showing problems faced by women workers in an organization**

Problems	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Gender Discrimination	10	20
Harassment By Superior	20	40
Low Wages/ Salary	15	30
Mental Pressure	5	10
Total	50	100

Primary Source

**Figure 3 showing problem faced by women workers in an organization**



**INTERPRETATION**

It is observed from the survey that 20% of the women that their main problem in the workplace is gender discrimination. 10% of women’s have the problem of mental pressure and rest of them are saying that they are facing the problem of harassment by the superior and the problem of low wages/ salary in the workplace.

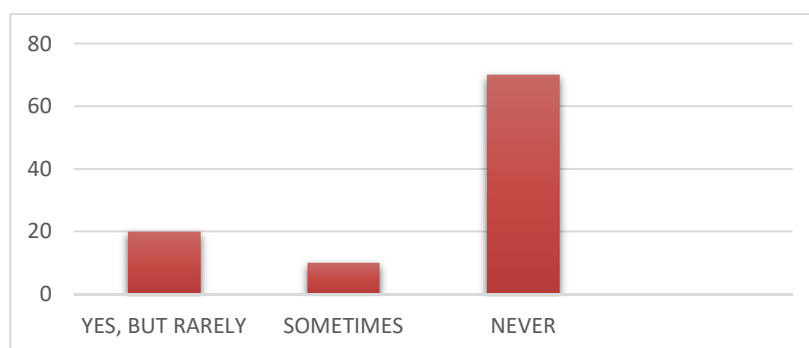
**4.Experience of sexual abuse at workplace**

**Table 4 showing experience of sexual abuse at workplace**

Sexual Abuse	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes, but rarely	10	20
Sometimes	5	10
Never	35	70
Total	50	100

Primary source

**Figure 4 showing sexual abuse at**



**experience of workplace**

**INTERPRETATION**

Majority of the women said that they never experience any kind of sexual harassment in the workplace. A few of them have an opinion that they face such kind of problems.

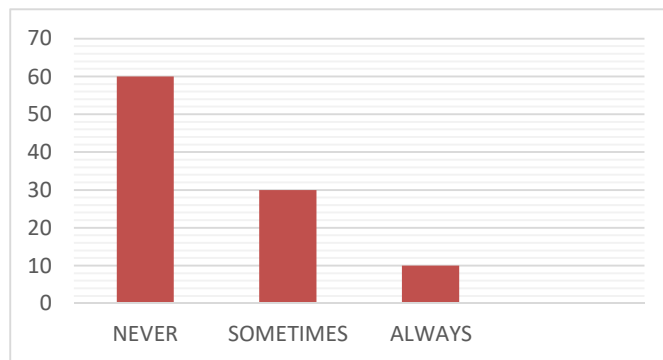
**5. Suffering from health issues**

**Table 5 showing women suffering from health issues due to problems in the workplace**

Health Issues	No of Respondents	Percentage
Never	30	60
Sometimes	15	30
Always	5	10
Total	50	100

Primary source

**Figure 5 showing health issues due workplace**



**women suffering from to problems in the**

**INTERPRETATION**

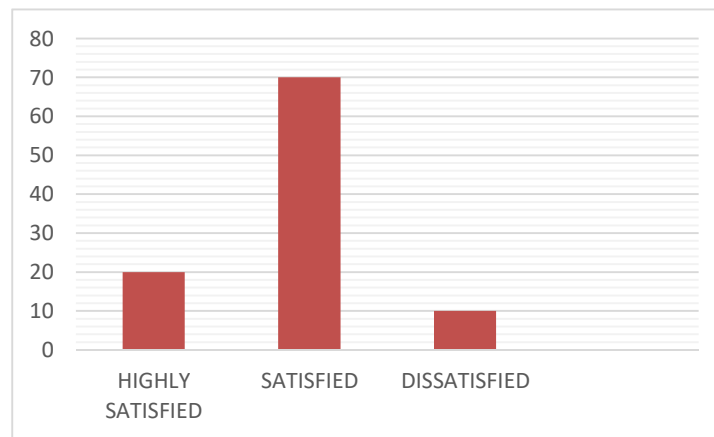
60% of women have not faced any kind of health issues, a 10% of them have health issues due to the problems in the workplace.

**6.Opinion about working environment**

**Table 6 showing opinion about working environment in the workplace**

<b>Opinion</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Highly Satisfied	10	20
Satisfied	35	70
Dissatisfied	5	10
Total	50	100

**showing opinion about working environment in the workplace**



**INTERPRETATION**

Most of the women are satisfied with their working environment and 20% are highly satisfied to the working environment. 10% are dissatisfied with the working environment.

**7.Attention towards women employees and their problems**

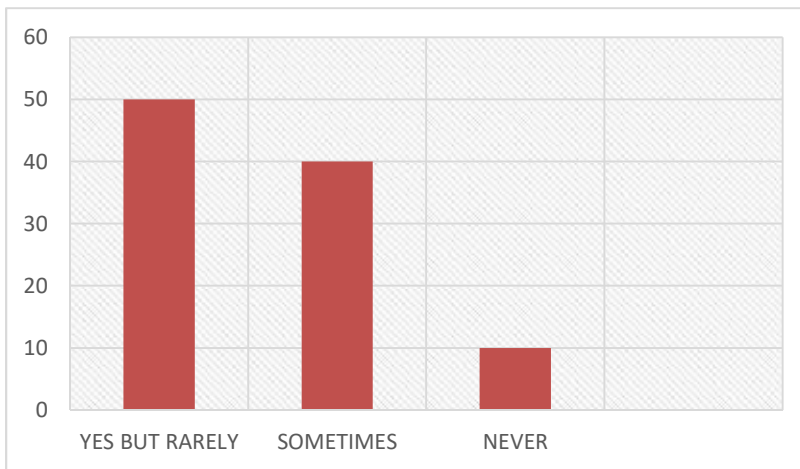
**Table 7 showing organization pay adequate attention towards women employees and their problems**



Attention	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes but rarely	25	50
Sometimes	20	40
Never	5	10
Total	50	100

Primary source

**Figure 7 showing organization pay adequate attention towards women employees and their problems**



**INTERPRETATION**

Most of the women workers have the opinion that the organization sometime give enough attention to the problem of the women workers and only 10% of them says that their workplace provides adequate attention to them.

**8. Incentives action for improving standard of living**

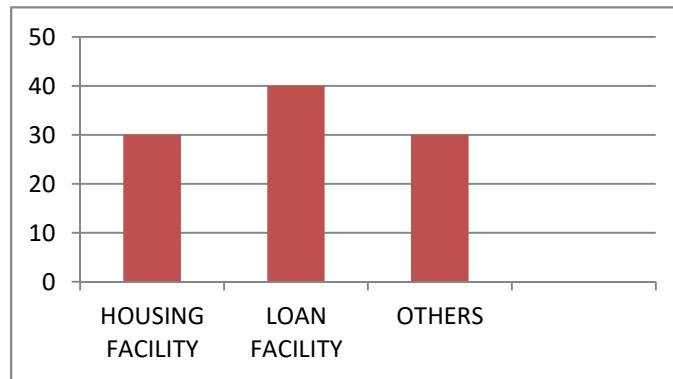
**Table 9 showing incentive action for improving standard of living of women employees in organization**

Incentives	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Hostel facility	15	30
Loan facility	20	40
Other facility	15	30

Total	50	100
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Primary source

**Figure 9 showing incentive action for improving standard of living of women employees in organization**



**INTERPRETATION**

From this survey we can observed that 30% of women employees received hostel and other facility from their workplace. And 40% of employees are received loan facility from the workplace.

**Findings**

1. According to studies, 40% of women have work shifts. 30% of those surveyed reported having safety concerns while working shifts.
2. Many female employees reported that the organization did not prioritize their needs and concerns.
3. Many female employees are dissatisfied with their work environment.
4. Occasionally, they experienced sexual harassment.
5. 10% of women believe their working concerns are causing health issues.
6. 20% of female employees obtained medical benefits from their employment.
7. According to the study, harassment by superiors is the most common workplace issue reported by employees.

8. Loans are the most common reward activity among female employees.
9. Only 20% of women say their organizations offer maternity leave.

### **Suggestion**

Organizations should implement a security system for female employees to ensure they can perform their duties safely. Providing self-defence training for women and installing workplace safety equipment. Offer travel options for employees, particularly those working nights. Working women deserve flexible schedules and remote work options. Counselors should be appointed by their organization. Partners can prioritize women's needs by assisting with daily tasks and childcare.

### **Conclusions**

In conclusion, this study has provided valuable insights into the myriad challenges faced by working women in the service sector within Ernakulam District, Kerala. Through a comprehensive research design encompassing questionnaire surveys, personal interviews, and data analysis, we have uncovered the multifaceted nature of the obstacles encountered by these women in their professional endeavors. From recruitment practices to remuneration disparities, working women continue to face systemic barriers that undermine their economic independence and career advancement opportunities.

These findings have consequences for society well-being and organizational productivity in addition to personal consequences. Organizations can maximize worker potential and help build more equitable and resilient communities by implementing gender-equitable policies and practices. Moving forward, it is imperative to translate these research findings into actionable strategies and policy interventions that empower working women in Ernakulam District, Kerala. This includes initiatives aimed at promoting work-life balance, enhancing access to education and skill development opportunities, and fostering a culture of diversity and inclusion within organizations. Additionally, raising awareness and challenging entrenched gender stereotypes are essential steps towards creating a more equitable and supportive environment for working women.

The findings up, this study highlights the significance of collaborative endeavors among governments, businesses, civil society organizations, and people to tackle the obstacles encountered by women employed in the service industry. We can build a more equitable and prosperous society where everyone has the c

hance to prosper, regardless of gender, by cooperating to tear down obstacles and advance gender equality.

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