

PROBLEMS OF SALES GIRLS IN NAGERCOIL TOWN

By

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Abstract

Women constitute an integral part of Indian's socio – economic life. Their role in economic development was not given any serious thought for a long time. However after the drawn of civilization and after the break out of cultural reformation in most of western countries. Women have become partners in economical and social development. In India after independence all round efforts have been made to promote the welfare of women. The constitution has guaranteed to all citizens, irrespective of sex, equality before the law and equality of opportunity in matters of public employments. Employment is considered to be an important indicator of women's achievement in the economic sphere. In the services, professional and industrial sectors, employment of women has increased fairly rapidly. Work participation rate for females has shown an increasingly trend in the unorganized sector both in the rural and urban areas also. In factories such as readymade garments and cloth manufacturing the labour force consists mainly of women. The important objectives of the study are to study the working conditions of sales girls in Nagercoil town, to analyze the wage rates and savings of sales girls, to know about the basic facilities allowed to the sales girls and to find out the job satisfaction of sales girls in the study area.

Keywords: sales girls, problems, socio – economic life, cultural reformation, nagercoil town.

Introduction

Women workers have various problems such as exploitation, injustice, discrimination. Indian women workers do not enjoy equal status in payment of remuneration, assignment of tasks and in conferring the privileges of promotion and opportunities for professional growth when compared to their male colleagues. Apart from this discriminatory treatment at the work place, they are also subjected to a variety of humiliation, insult and ill treatment by their family members, neighbors, colleagues and other members of society in which they are living.

The women workers receive fewer wages. The poorer family member depends wholly on the women's earnings. The investment on female worker is less than the male workers. Working women everywhere in the world have their own problems. The problems of working women have not sprung up all of a sudden. They are there right from time immemorial. The only problem is their nature and magnitude.

Generally female workers have to be found in the lowest strata. The women who were already at work are those women living primarily in the rural areas and concentrated among the poorer families where their

earnings were crucial. The scheduled caste women suffered the more hardship. Most of the female workers engage themselves in seasonal activities which include agriculture, cottage industries and other petty shop business. They are paid low salary compared to other male workers working in the same sectors.

Women are largely employed in the primary sector of the economy. In the secondary and tertiary sectors the female working force is much less when compared to the males employed in transport, trade and others. Women from lower middle class families have also moved out to work due to their economic necessity. Another reason for non – employment of women workers is they take long leave due to pregnancy and child birth. The education and training facilities provided to the women in our country are not fully utilized due to economic conditions of the family and social and cultural conditions too. Social prejudices in our country for women are more than physical barriers that exist.

In the past, women engaged in unskilled or semiskilled occupations as water women, fisher women. In many of the occupations like agriculture, agro based industries, handicrafts, handlooms, cottage industries and construction work. Employment is often seasonal and of low skill, low wages which bring women little income. Women worker is less paid less valued and recognition to women's work is also poor. The society also feels women are incapable of performing administrative work. This type of gender disparity depresses the hope and aspiration of even educated women.

Women in rural areas due to their low educational level involve in traditional crafts like basket making, tobacco procession, weaving and agriculture. These activities and only supplementary occupations were adding some resource to their family.

Problems of unorganized women labour

The unorganized labourers face a number of problems including the following:

- No clear occupational classification.
- Working in very small scattered units.
- Absence of clear and smooth employer – employee relation.
- Working in different work environments.
- Workers have little education and poor skills.
- Absence of social security.
- Poor living conditions.

Review of Related Studies

N. Manonmany in his analytical study on *The Problems Of Women Labour* has examined in detail the problems of women labour in India. The progress of women in India is mostly depends upon their multi various domestic work, family responsibility, illiteracy and restrictions imposed on them by society to which they belong over and above this the general tendency among people is to ignore the health of women and her importance in society consequently and has put it through women are born free in India, they are found to be in social economical in most of the societies.

G.P.Swamkar says that the most serious problem in rural areas is growing unemployment. Family employment forms an important part at the rural level in India. The occupational structure of female workers is an important factors determining their status.

Sudha Kumari in her study found in her studies on women in Calcutta that women had a target income level which they tried to attain through their service over a period of seven years, an increasing number of women were coming forward even though the wage rates remained almost constant.

Vina Mazumbar says on the status of women in India that the Indian labour committee constituted by the union government to survey the problems of working women including discrimination in employment and remuneration particularly in the context of the constitutional legal and administrative provisions that are supposed to govern women's status.

Statement of the Problem

The women workers of the country occupy a place not only subordinate to men in society. But also to their female counter parts from other strata of society. Sales girls constitute a labour force within the frame work of the society that gives them the responsibility of happier living of middle and upper class families. No recognition on however is given to them as a regular labour force. Instead they are looked down upon as most of them belong to socially inferior castes with heavy and disgraceful work. The domestic working women come from poor families often illiterate or semi – illiterate, moreover devoid of any skills they become an easy prey for exploitation. They have no legal protection of trade union to demand their rights. In Kanyakumari district the increase in the demand for domestic workers arose due to the change brought about by industrialization especially in the urban areas. To know deeply about the problems faced by the sales girls the researcher selected the topic “Problems of sales girls in Nagercoil town”.

Objectives of the study

The study is based on the following objects:

1. To study the working conditions of sales girls in Nagercoil town.
2. To analyze the wage rates and savings of sales girls in Nagercoil town.
3. To know about the basic facilities allowed to the sales girls.
4. To find out the job satisfaction of sales girls in the study area.
5. To document the findings and suggestions of the study.

Methodology

Data Source

This study is carried on the basis of both primary data and secondary data. There are different types of employment potentialities of the sales girls in Nagercoil town they are *Textiles, Fancy Store, Medical Shop, Margin Free Market and Jewelers Shop*. The Primary data was collected from 50 sales girls working in *Margin Free Shops, Textiles, Medical Shop, and Fancy Stores* using an interview schedule. The respondents are selected only by random sampling method. The secondary data are collected from various journals, books, articles and the annual reports of the labour office.

Sampling Design

There are more than 500 *Textiles, Fancy Store, Medical Shop, Margin Free Market and Jewelers Shops* in Nagercoil town and lot of sales girls working in these shops. 50 of them are randomly selected from using convenient sampling method.

Statistical tools used

The collected data were analyzed using percentage analysis and presented in the form of tables.

Analysis of Data

Age composition : Age plays an important role in determining the working efficiency of the

sales girls. The sample respondents are classified under various age groups and given in the below table as follows.

Table 1. Classification of the respondents on the basis of the age composition

Age group	Working source					Respondents	Percentage
	Textile	Fancy Store	Medical Shop	Jewelers Shop	Margin Free Shop		
15 – 20	1	3	-	2	2	8	16
21 – 25	5	3	2	8	2	20	40
26 – 30	4	1	2	3	2	12	24
Above 30	2	1	4	1	2	10	20
Total						50	100

Source: Survey figure

It is inferred from the above table that eight (16 Percent) of the respondents comes under the age group of 15 – 20, 20 (40 Percent) of them belongs to the age group of 21 – 25, 12 (24 Percent) of the sales girls come under the age group of 26 – 30 and the remaining 10 (20 Percent) of the respondents come under the age group of above 30 years.

Educational qualification

Education is an important criteria which is helpful for the human and economic development. The qualification is not much important to work as sales girls. But some shop owners prefer the women worker to have a minimum educational qualification of SSLC.

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Educational qualification

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Table 2. Classification of respondents on the basis of their educational qualification

Educational qualification	Working source					Respondents	Percentage
	Textile	Fancy Store	Medical Shop	Jewelers Shop	Margin Free Shop		
Hr. secondary	6	4	10	4	4	28	56
High school	2	2	6	3	1	14	28
U.G	1	3	1	1	2	8	16
Total						50	100

Source: Survey figure

From the above Table we came to know that there are no illiterates and primary education holders working as sales girls. Majority 28 (56 Percent) of the respondents have the educational qualification up to higher secondary, 14 (28 Percent) of them studied up to high school and the remaining eight (16 Percent) of the respondents are undergraduates.

Table 3. Drinking water facility provided to the sample respondents

Drinking water facility	Working source					Respondents	Percentage
	Textile	Fancy Store	Medical Shop	Jewelers Shop	Margin Free Shop		
Adequate	4	4	6	2	4	20	40
Non adequate	10	8	6	4	2	30	60
Total						50	100

Source: Survey figure

It is inferred from the above Table and Figure 4.6 majority 30 (60 percent) of the sales girls do not have adequate water facility in the working spot and they are not satisfied. The remaining 20 (40 Percent) of the sample respondents have adequate drinking water facility in the work place and they are fully satisfied.

Drinking water facility

Drinking water is very essential basic need for a human being. The drinking water facility is provided in every shop in the Nagercoil town. The below table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of the drinking water facility provided to them in the shops.

Rest room

Another important facility required for the sales girls is the rest room provided in the shops. They prefer rest room to refresh themselves and to take rest during the interval time or lunch break. The classification of the respondents on the basis of the availability of rest room in the shops is given table.

Table 4. Distribution of the respondents on the basis of availability of rest room

Availability of rest room	Working source					Respondents	Percentage
	Textile	Fancy Store	Medical Shop	Jewelers Shop	Margin Free Shop		
Yes	4	2	6	2	4	18	36
No	10	4	6	8	4	32	64
Total						50	100

Source: Survey figure

It is inferred from the above Table Majority 32 (64 Percent) of the respondents have the availability of rest room in their working spot and the remaining 18 (36 Percent) of them are not having the availability of rest room in the shops.

Urinal & Toilet Facility

Another important essential for the sales girls is latrines and urinal facility. The below table shows the distribution of the respondents on the basis of the availability of the urinal and toilet facility available in the working spot.

Table 5. Distribution of the respondents on the basis of the urinal and toilet facility

Availability of toilets & urinals	Working source					Respondents	Percentage
	Textile	Fancy Store	Medical Shop	Jewelers Shop	Margin Free Shop		
Yes	8	4	2	4	2	20	40
No	4	8	10	6	2	30	60
Total						50	100

Source: Survey figure

The above table illustrate that majority 30 (60 Percent) of the respondents not have the availability of toilets and urinals in the working spot and they are not satisfied and the remaining 20 (40 percent) of the respondents are not provided with the urinal facility in the working spot.

Leave and holidays with pay

The analysis of leave regulations reveals that all the sales girls are entitled to casual leave and sick leave. Some of the respondents are provided with the payment along with the permission to avail leave.

Table 6. Distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of leave facility

Leave facility	Respondents	Percentage
With pay	10	20
Without pay	40	80
Total	50	100

Source: Survey figure

It is inferred from the above table that majority 20 (80 percent) of the respondents are provided leave facility without payment and the remaining 5(20 percent) of them are provided leave facility with payment.

Working Hours

Working for long hours is the main problem faced by the sales girls. The working hours are high but the wage is very low. The rate of problem varies when computed on the basis

of wages and the working hours of the respondents.

Table 7. Distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of working hours

Working Source	Hours of work	Respondent	Percentage
Textiles	11	12	24
Fancy store	10	8	16
Medical shop	12	14	28
Jewelers shop	11	10	20
Margin free market	10	6	12
Total		50	100

Source: Survey figure

It is inferred from the above Table that 24 percent of the respondents working in textiles are working for 11hour in the fancy store 16 percent of the respondents are working for 10 hours. Majority 28 percent of the respondents working in the medical shops are working for 12 hours, 20 percent of the respondents are working in jewellery for 11 hours and the remaining 12 percent of them working in the margin free shops are working for 10 hours per day.

Interval duration per day

The interval time is very important for the sales girls to refresh themselves and for relaxation. The interval time varies from one shop to another. In some shops there is no interval period between the working hours.

Table 8. Distribution of the respondents on the basis of duration of interval

Working Source	Interval Duration	Respondent	Percentage
Textiles	30 minutes	10	20
Medical shop	Nil	14	28
Margin free shop	15 minutes	8	16
Fancy Store	25 minutes	10	20
Jewelers	20 minutes	8	16
Total		50	100

Source: Survey figure

It is inferred from the above table that the 20 percent of the respondents working in the textiles have 30 minutes as interval time and 28 percent of the respondents working from

the percent of the respondents working in the medical shop have no interval time to refresh themselves. 16 percent of the respondents working in the margin free shops and jewelers have interval time up to 15 and 20 minutes respectively and the remaining 20 percentage of the respondents working in the fancy stores have 25 minutes as their interval time per day during the working hours.

Wage Conditions

The work load of women workers is high, but the wage rate is low. The living conditions and the urge to fulfill the daily needs of the family is very high and hence most of the women go for work but they earn very less per month.

Table 9. Classification of the respondents on the basis of monthly wages

Wages (Rs.)	Working source					Respondents	Percentage
	Textile	Fancy Store	Medical Shop	Jewelers Shop	Margin Free Shop		
Up to 2000	4	6	4	2	2	18	36
2001- 3500	6	3	2	1	4	16	32
3501-5000	4	1	1	5	1	12	24
Above 5000	2	1	1	-	-	4	8
Total						50	100

Source: Survey figure

The above table explains the monthly wages earned by the sales girls working in the various Textiles, Fancy Store, Medical Shop, Jewelers and Margin free shop. Majority 18 (36 Percent) respondents receive up to Rs.2000, 16 (32 percent) of the sales girls receive Rs.2001-3500 as monthly wages, 12 (24 percent) of the respondents earn Rs.3501- 5000 as monthly wages and the remaining four (8 percent) of

the respondents earn more than Rs.5000 as their monthly wages.

Monthly savings of the sample respondents

Every human being tries to save at least a small portion of his income for the welfare of his family. They prefer chit funds and banks as the source of saving. The below table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of the amount saved by them per month.

Table 10. Classification of respondents on the basis of monthly saving

Monthly Savings	Working source					Respondents	Percentage
	Textile	Fancy Store	Medical Shop	Jewelers Shop	Margin Free Shop		
Less than 1000	10	4	8	4	6	32	64
1001 – 2000	4	1	2	1	1	9	18
Above 2000	1	3	1	2	2	9	18
Total						50	100

Source: Survey figure

It is inferred from the above Table that majority 32 (64 Percent) of the respondents save less than 1000 Rs. Per month and the remaining 9 (18 Percent) of the sample respondents have Rs.1001 – 2000 and above Rs.2000 as their savings per month.

Distance travelled by the respondents for work

Women workers mainly prefer to work near their native place. Due to the weak family situations and to help their parents they are supposed to travel long distances to work. The below table shows the distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of the distance travelled by them for their work

Table 11. Distance travelled by the respondents to the working spot

Distance (in km)	Working source					Respondents	Percentage
	Textile	Fancy Store	Medical Shop	Jewelers Shop	Margin Free Shop		
Less than 1	2	1	1	1	1	6	12
1 – 3	1	3	2	4	2	12	24
4 – 6	4	3	2	1	4	14	28
7 – 9	6	4	2	4	2	18	36
Total						50	100

Source: Survey figure

It is inferred from the above table Majority 18 (36 percent) of the respondents are travelling 7-9 km for the working spot, 28 percent of them travelling up to 4 to 6km from their residence to the working spot. 12 (24 percent) of the respondents travel from 1 to 3 km and the remaining 6 (12 percent) respondents are supposed to travel less than 1km from their residence to the working spot.

Job satisfaction of the sample respondents

The job satisfaction of each and every worker is an important factor influencing their physical and mental well being. Most of the women workers are not satisfied in their work and are going to work only to fulfill their domestic needs.

Table 12. Job satisfaction of the sample respondents

Response	Working source					Respondents	Percentage
	Textile	Fancy Store	Medical Shop	Jewelers Shop	Margin Free Shop		
Satisfied	1	4	2	4	3	14	28
Not satisfied	11	9	4	4	8	36	72
Total						50	100

Source: Survey figure

From the above Table we came to know that majority 36 (72 Percent) of the respondents are not satisfied in their job and the remaining 14 (28 Percent) of them are satisfied in their job.

Findings

1. The age distribution of the sample respondents reveals that majority of them (40 percent) comes under the age group of 21-25.
2. The wages are very low with long working hours.
3. The sample respondents are working 12 hours per day.
4. Sales girls do not get any interval in between the working hours.
5. All sales girls have multiple role of their occupation like sales, computer operators, accountant and cleaners. Majority of them are engaged in sales.
6. Majority of the sample respondents are unsatisfied with the jobs.
7. Sales girls are affected by a lot of dust and dirt.
8. There are no illiterates.

Suggestions

1. Government should provide employees insurance facilities to the sales girls.
2. Interest free loans must be provided sales girls to start new business.
3. Government should insist the owner of the shops to make all the basic facilities in the premises of the shops.
4. Unions can be formed for sales girls to fight for their rights, highly educated persons can be appointed a president and secretary for such unions who can guide and mobilize the sales girls in the right path.
5. Sales girls can open co-operative societies or self help groups for their own development.
6. The minimum wage shall be fixed for the sales girls and provident fund and pension plans shall be extended.

Conclusion

The above study deeply analyses the important problems faced by the sales girls in Nagercoil town. Most of the sales girls are not provided with basic needs such as drinking water and toilet facilities. So it is necessary to come forward to provide adequate facilities to them and hence they must able to do their work with full satisfaction.

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