



A Study of Perception of Challenges and Issues Faced by Working Women in their workplace with References to Parul University

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ABSTRACT:

This study explores the challenges and issues faced by working women at Parul University, focusing on their perceptions and experiences in the workplace. It examines persistent gender biases, workplace inequalities, and structural barriers such as the "glass ceiling" that hinder women's professional growth. This paper focusses the part of Introduction, Literature review, objectives Data Method, finding and conclusion. Introduction parts contain backgrounds of study. Literature review mainly focuses on article journal related with socio-economic and cultural status of transgender community. Main objectives were perception of challenges and issues faced by working women in their workplace.

Data and Method- Researcher used quantitative method for this study. Descriptives research design was used for investigate and assess the attitudes, challenges, and issues encountered by working women at Parul University. Sampling size is 40 working women and purposive sampling method was used in this study.

Results and Finding - According to result and finding working women faces numbers of challenges of work life balances, salary problems and lack of support re major finding this study.

Conclusion- Conclusion part contains Working women face challenges such as low pay, poor work-life balance, and physical health concerns, with long hours and insufficient workplace support contributing to stress. It also includes that foster a more inclusive and friendly workplace, organisations must prioritise equitable compensation, educational support, health benefits, and work-life balance policies.

Key words – Working Women, law wages, work life balance, physical health, issues, challenges etc.

Introduction:

Discrimination against women in the workplace is a major issue, frequently appearing in derogatory statements regarding their physical and medical situations. Employers, colleagues, and even clients may contribute to this bias by limiting a female employee's working hours, delaying promotions, lowering pay, or requiring unpaid vacation. Such discriminatory behaviours hinder gender equality, creating impediments to women's professional progress and economic independence.

The Indian Constitution guarantees the right to equality to all citizens and outlaws discrimination based on gender, caste, or ethnicity. However, constitutional provisions are primarily applicable to the state, necessitating the passage of separate legislation to extend protections to the private sector. Over time, the Indian government has passed legislation to increase women's representation in policymaking and workforce involvement. These efforts have resulted in progressive workplace rules that encourage gender equality in the workforce.

One of the key legislative measures in India is the Equal Remuneration Act of 1976, which mandates equal pay for men and women performing the same work. The act also prohibits discrimination in hiring, training, and promotions. However, while some companies have used the act to favor female candidates, it does not explicitly endorse positive discrimination. The Code on Wages 2019, once fully implemented, aims to replace the binary understanding of gender and ensure fair remuneration regardless of gender identity.

Similarly, the Maternity Benefit Act of 1961 was a significant step towards protecting women's rights in the workplace. The 2017 update to the statute extended maternity leave to 26 weeks for the first two children, making it one of the most progressive programs in the world. It also allows for adoption and surrogacy leave, and companies are prohibited from firing female employees during maternity leave or adversely affecting their working circumstances.

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act of 2013, known as the POSH Act, mandates the establishment of grievance committees and the implementation of preventive policies. It requires organizations to conduct regular training programs and maintain transparency by reporting sexual harassment cases annually. These measures ensure a safer and more inclusive work environment for women.

Recent studies indicate a shift in workforce dynamics, with younger, more educated women entering formal employment sectors while older women with lower educational qualifications exit the workforce. This trend is contributing to a reduction in the gender wage gap, as more women secure salaried positions instead of working in informal and unpaid roles. Additionally, there has been a transition from agricultural employment to jobs in the service industry, further reshaping the female labor force participation rate.

India has also witnessed a rise in women holding leadership positions. The Grant Thornton Women in Business Report 2021 highlights that 39% of senior management roles in India are occupied by women, exceeding the global average of 31%. Nearly 98% of Indian businesses have at least one female leader, demonstrating progress in workplace diversity and inclusivity. Companies are increasingly adopting gender-inclusive policies such as mentorship programs, flexible work arrangements, and leadership quotas to foster professional growth for women.

Despite these advancements, women still face significant workplace challenges, particularly in manual labor sectors. Women working in physically demanding jobs often encounter gender bias, unequal pay, and limited career advancement opportunities. The absence of adequate childcare facilities, unsafe transportation, and societal expectations about women's roles further restrict their professional development.

At institutions like Parul University, manual labor women workers struggle with physical strain, unsafe working conditions, and a lack of legal protections. Many are employed in precarious jobs without social security benefits such as maternity leave, health insurance, or pensions. Additionally, the absence of mentorship programs and professional support networks makes it difficult for these women to voice concerns and advocate for better working conditions.

To achieve true gender equality in the workplace, ongoing efforts are needed to address these systemic challenges. Strengthening legal frameworks, enforcing anti-discrimination laws, and promoting workplace safety for women in all sectors—including manual labor—are essential steps. Furthermore, fostering a cultural shift that values women's contributions equally and eliminates gender biases will be crucial in ensuring a more equitable future for working women in India.

Review of Literature:

Rohilla and Mehta (2020) investigated the challenges encountered by working women in Hisar, focusing on the impact of familial responsibilities and workplace policies. The study revealed that married women often bear a greater obligation to care for their children and family, which can result in difficult situations. Additionally, some employers' refusal to provide maternal and child care leave can compel women employees to resign from their positions. This research highlights the critical need for supportive workplace policies to address the unique challenges faced by working women.

Rohilla and Mehta (2020) conducted study in Hisar, Haryana, focused on challenges faced by metropolitan working women, with 50 respondents selected randomly using the snowball technique. The findings indicated that 27% of respondents lacked personal time compared to male family members, while work and social responsibilities adversely affected their health and increased stress. Unequal family support was reported by 26%, alongside difficulties like working late or on weekends (12%). Anxiety (39%) and irritation (23%) were common issues, with only 9% reporting work inefficiency. The research emphasizes the need for organizations to implement supportive measures, including child care facilities and leave policies for working women, to address these challenges effectively. Such findings underline the importance of creating equitable workplace environments and contribute valuable insights into the evolving dynamics of gender roles and professional responsibilities.

Kalidasan, et.al. (2017) highlighted the challenges related to work-life balance among working women, highlighting the profound impact of economic and social changes on their roles. The study emphasized that working women face immense pressure to perform professionally while remaining actively engaged in personal responsibilities, often leaving them with limited personal time.

Kapur (2019) examined the challenges encountered by women employees in advancing their careers in India, emphasizing the impact of familial commitments on their professional growth. The study identified work-life conflicts as a significant barrier to achieving top managerial positions. Key areas of focus included employment trends for women, workplace challenges, career development barriers, and strategies to address these issues. Recommendations emphasized fostering work-life balance and implementing measures to overcome obstacles to professional advancement. This research underscores the importance of addressing systemic issues to promote equitable career opportunities for women in India.

Lakshmi and Prasanth (2019) studied the evolving roles of working women, highlighting the pressures of balancing career demands with personal responsibilities. Their research emphasized that increased workloads and the integration of work and personal life through technology often lead to stress, affecting physical, emotional, and social well-being. Using Daniels and McCarragher's work-life balance framework, the study identified significant challenges faced by married working women in Visakhapatnam, revealing the impact of work-life balance on overall vitality and well-being. This research underscores the need for strategies to support healthy work-life balance among working women.

Baruah (2011) explored the challenges and opportunities faced by female construction workers in urban India, with empirical research conducted in Ahmedabad. Surveys by the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in 1998, 2003, and 2007 highlighted the needs and priorities of these

workers amidst economic globalization. The study emphasized the significance of training and certification in enhancing skilled women's access to quality employment, while advocating for broader state and national policy interventions to ensure sustainable and gender-equitable outcomes.

V. Sai Prasanth and N. Lakshmi (2019) *A Study on Working Women's Work-Life Balance* The responsibilities of working women have changed over time to accommodate shifting social and economic demands. Women in the workforce are under a lot of pressure to succeed in their jobs and lead hectic personal lives. Women in the workforce are dealing with more work, which leaves them with less time for self-care. In today's information era, integrating business and personal life through technology, including notepads and cell phones, can cause stress for both parties. This encompasses the person's social, emotional, and physical health. For working women to maintain a healthy lifestyle, work-life balance is crucial. The challenges faced by working women in juggling their personal and professional lives are examined in this research. This essay examines married working women's work-life balance. The work-life balance handbook by Daniels and McCarragher from The Industrial Society (now the Work Foundation) was used in the survey. Significant obstacles to preserving work-life balance were identified by descriptive statistics for working women in Visakhapatnam. The data also indicates that people's level of vitality is influenced by their work-life balance.

Sabat, I.E., Lindsey, A.P., King, E.B., and Jones, K.P. (2016) *A Theoretical and Empirical Review of the Difficulties Working Mothers Face and How to Overcome Them* Unfair hiring practices, unequal career advancement opportunities, ineffective retention efforts, and inaccessible work-family supportive policies are just a few of the unique social identity, stigmatisation, and discrimination challenges faced by working mothers at every stage of the employment cycle (Jones et al. in *The Psychology for Business Success*, Praeger, Westport, CT, 2013). These disparities can hurt organisations overall in addition to having a detrimental effect on women. Numerous theoretical and empirical studies on the challenges faced by women transitioning from employment to parenthood will be examined in this chapter. We then offer suggestions that organisations, moms, and allies can use to greatly enhance the employment experiences of mothers and pregnant women. By referencing identity management and ally research from other fields, this chapter will add to the existing body of knowledge by suggesting more strategies that female targets and supportive co-workers could use to lessen these detrimental consequences at work. Lastly, we address methodological concerns and solutions related to this crucial study area, as well as prospective research projects aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of these and other remediation strategies. We encourage academics to create more theory-based, empirically supported intervention plans that engage everyone in the fight to remove gender inequality in the workplace.

Bardhan K. (1985) *Women's Employment, Well-being, and Status: Traditional and Changing Factors in India* This paper's first three sections address the structure of work in relation to poverty and hierarchy: the disparities in the amount and quality of work participation; the differences in wages, work options, and access to better work opportunities; and the organised bargaining power to alter the terms of current employment. How patriarchy interacts with the caste-and-class hierarchy to sustain labour market fragmentation and differences in access to resources and means for employment is the key question. The subject of whether and how disparities in employment involvement impact other aspects of women's status and welfare, such as the standard of living for women, is covered in Section IV. The most researched topics to date have been the oppressiveness of dowries, the desire for males, and the absence of nurturing for female infants and children. Regarding women's participation in economically productive jobs, the question is whether there is any correlation between these across communities and geographical areas. Concerns concerning the underlying mechanisms for conflict containment, such as internalisation, manipulation, and deception processes that are not entirely one-way, are raised by the persistence of gender inequality in work and compensation, options and opportunities, and power and control. But the fact that women's struggles are still rising from the ashes like a phoenix draws attention to the processes of catalysis and mobilisation, as well as the splits and alliances among women.

Jesu Rajan, F.S.A. Antony, S. Anu, and Dr. R. Vetriselvan (2016) *Issues Women Face in Theni District* In rural Tamil Nadu, women are the most vulnerable group due to social stigma. The majority of women in rural areas work exclusively by hand. One of Tamil Nadu's economically underprivileged southern districts is Theni. Along with textiles and agriculture, the construction sector significantly contributes to the generation of jobs. The difficulties faced by female construction workers both at work and at home are the main topic of this study. In the construction sector, unskilled female labourers, referred to as "Chithaals," support male employees. In addition to having less access to basic facilities, female employees are paid half as much as male employees and do not receive welfare or maternity benefits. Government and non-governmental organisations should keep an eye on the sector to enhance working conditions, develop social programs, and give employees fair compensation. This creates new avenues for research in the construction industry to enhance future working conditions for female employees.

Walters, V. (1993) *Women's Reports of Health Issues: Stress, Anxiety, and Depression*. A stratified random sample of 356 Canadian women revealed that the most often reported health issues were sadness, anxiety, and stress. This study's first component examines the many social characteristics of people who have dealt with stress, anxiety, and depression. Women's family structure, amount of labour market participation, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and the quality of their family interactions all had an impact on their mental health issues. It is said that to understand the social production of mental health and its differences among women, a more thorough analysis of these aspects of women's estate is necessary. The following portions of the study concentrate on women's perceptions of the reasons for their mental health issues. Even while they talked about particular facets of their own lives, they usually contextualised them in relation to broader social factors. They stressed the importance of gender norms and how women are portrayed, as well as the social determinants of mental health. They talked about societal legacies, identity issues, and women's heavy workloads. Lastly, it appears that women normalise the mental health problems they disclose. Lack of social validation and acknowledgement for their experiences could be the cause of this.

Siddiqui, N.A., Aeri, A., Singh, C., Nandan, A., Mondal, P., Singh, A.K. (2023) *Concerns Women Construction Workers Face Regarding III Health Impacts, Wage Inequality, and Unsecure Workplace* The bulk of unskilled people are employed in the construction industry, which has been a major driver of India's development in recent years. Due to a number of factors, such as the fact that most workers (labourers) lack a basic education, that workers move from one state to another in pursuit of employment, and that duties are not set in stone because most activities change frequently, it is

considered one of the least organised sectors. For a woman to thrive in such a male-dominated field is unthinkable. Men, on the other hand, start out as unskilled labourers but develop their skills in the second half, while women do not. The various difficulties a woman faces on a building site will be covered in this article, including pre-existing musculoskeletal conditions, pay inequalities, prospects for advancement, equality, discrimination, and harassment. In addition to the site issues, most women seem to put off family planning, which causes them a great deal of mental stress in trying to manage their personal and professional lives.

Data and Method

Rational for selection of Study Area

Parul University is a private university of Vadodara District of Gujarat. Present study is on Perception of Challenges and Issues faced by working women in their workplace with references to Parul University. Researcher selected Parul University working women which is very negligible for this subject. There is many research has been done for working women but Parul University working women has neglected for study. There is no proposed study on these issues. Researcher taken working women from Parul University. And wanted explore more and more knowledge about proposed study. Hence researcher selected this location.

Research Design

The study used a descriptive research design to investigate and assess the attitudes, challenges, and issues encountered by working women at Parul University. This approach is excellent for gathering thorough information about the socioeconomic status, health conditions, workplace challenges, and potential coping techniques.

Universe of study: Universe of Study was Parul University of Vadodara District of Gujarat.

Study Population:

The study population consists of working women employed at Parul University, including support personnel from several departments.

Sample Size:

The sample size is set at 40 responders to guarantee a representative and manageable study group.

Sampling Technique:

Purposive sampling was utilised to reduce bias and ensure that all working women at Parul University have an equal opportunity to participate in the study.

Sources of Data Collection

Primary and secondary data sources were used for the data collection.

Primary data: Researcher had to approach all respondents such as working women. Researcher has collected data from all stakeholders using structured and semi- structured interview scheduled

Secondary Data: The researcher used all material regarding study such as material from government reports, publications, articles, websites, books, journals, research papers, literature regarding Scheduled caste education, their achievements, and challenges. Use of internet for e-book also contained sources of secondary data information for study concerned.

Structured Interview Schedule – The Primary data have been collected with the help of interviews scheduled for working women and taken interview from working women of Parul University.

Semi- Structured Interview Schedule – Semi structured interview tool helped to collect from Students, government officer, other government staff. Being semi structured question, it was easier to capture the views, opinion, and experience's opinion of students in a descriptive manner.

Results and Finding

Table no-01

Age Group of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
20-30	12	30
31-40	22	55
41-50	6	15

Total	40	100
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The table no -01 depicts the age distribution of a group of forty persons. The largest age group, 31-40, accounts for 55% (22 people) of the total sample. The 20-30 age range is next, accounting for 30% (12 people). The 41-50 age group is the smallest, with 15% (6 people). The Total row confirms that there are forty participants in the sample, and the percentages add up to 100%. This table illustrates that the majority of the sample's members are between the ages of 31 and 40, with fewer falling into the younger and older categories.

Table No -02

Challenges faced by the respondents

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Gender discrimination	0	0
Work- life balance	17	43
Salary problem	12	30
Lack of support	11	28
Total	40	100

The table no -02 displays the distribution of individuals who face various challenges. It shows that no one in the sample has experienced gender discrimination. The most common difficulty is work-life balance, which impacts 17 people. Twelve persons report salary issues, while eleven complain about a lack of assistance. The Total row indicates that there are forty participants in the sample. However, percentages for each category are not provided; instead, frequency counts show the proportions of these difficulties in the sample.

According to this table, the group's most pressing challenge is maintaining work-life balance. It is also concluded that working women faces lots challenges about work life because they mostly involve in household activities. It is also very difficult for them to taking care their kids when they are involves in any job.

Table No-03

Ranking of work environment

Ranking work environment	Frequency	Percentage
Poor	5	12.5
Fair	12	30
Good	22	55
Excellent	1	2.5
Total	40	100

Table No -03 indicates the ranking of the work environment for a group of 40 people. The majority, 55% (22 people), assess the work environment as good, with 30% (12 people) rating it fair. A smaller fraction, 12.5% (5 people), believe the work environment to be poor, with only 2.5% (1 person) rating it excellent. The Total row confirms that there are 40 people in the sample, and the percentages sum to 100%. It is also found that according to perception of working women, work culture and its environment is very much suitable for working women.

Table No- 4

Physical issues faced

Physical issues	Frequency	Percentage
Back pain	13	33
Joint pain	9	23
Headache	8	20
Fatigue	10	25
Total	40	100

The table depicts the distribution of people facing various physical problems. The most prevalent complaint is back discomfort, which affects 33% (13 people) of the group. Fatigue is the second most prevalent complaint, affecting 25% (10 persons). Joint discomfort affects 23% (9 people), while headaches are reported by 20% (8 people). The Total row validates the sample size of 40 people, and the percentages sum up to 100%. This chart shows that back discomfort is the most common physical complaint, with exhaustion being a major concern for many people.

Table No- 5

Stress at work

Stress at work	Frequency	Percentage
Never	10	25
Rarely	14	35
Sometimes	16	40
Every time	0	0
Total	40	100

The table shows the distribution of people who are stressed at work. The largest group, 40% (16 people), is stressed on occasion, followed by 35% (14 people) who are stressed occasionally. 25% (10 persons) report they never feel worried at work, and no one in the sample experiences stress on a daily basis. The Total row confirms that there are forty participants in the sample, and the percentages add up to 100%. This table demonstrates that the majority of people experience stress at work on occasion or infrequently, with a smaller minority experiencing stress never.

Conclusion:

The study finds that, while working women at Parul University benefit from various workplace amenities, they continue to face obstacles such as low pay, work-life balance, and physical health concerns. Long working hours and inadequate workplace assistance cause stress for a considerable section of the workforce. However, the lack of reported gender discrimination indicates either a favourable work environment or an unwillingness to raise such matters.

To foster a more inclusive and friendly workplace, organisations must prioritise equitable compensation, educational support, health benefits, and work-life balance policies. Addressing these issues would not only improve the well-being of working women, but will also lead to increased job satisfaction and productivity in the long run.

This study emphasises the importance of conducting additional research on women's employment experiences in other industries to ensure ongoing progress in gender equality and professional development.

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