

# A Study on Satisfaction of Female Workforce Regarding Their Safety at Workplace in Manufacturing Sector

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**Abstract:-** This study aims at looking into the satisfaction of females, working in the manufacturing industry regarding their safety related to physical, social and environmental aspect. In today's competitive world where there is observed a hike in the women workforce in the manufacturing sector also, which was pre dominantly considered to be the arena of the male workforce the safety of woman is at the most important parameter to be looked into. Based on this research we are trying to learn how safe women feel in their respective workplace in the manufacturing sector. This research is basically being conducted in the one of biggest manufacturing hubs in India which is Gujarat.

**Keywords:-** Manufacturing Sector, Female Employees, Safety for Women.

## I. INTRODUCTION AND ABOUT MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

Manufacturing Industry in India has gone through various phases of development over the period of time. Manufacturing means production of goods for use or sale using labor and machines, tools, chemical and biological processing, or formulation. In its earliest form, manufacturing was usually carried out by a single skilled artisan with unskilled or semi-skilled labour.

Women are underrepresented in India's manufacturing sector with participation ranging from only three to 12%, a study by Consulate General of Sweden in India reveals

Manufacturing sector output of Gujarat stands at 13% of the total output of the total national output. The state is leader in production of Soda ash, Salt, Petrochemical downstream products and Export of Diamonds.

Out of a total of 6.34 lakh "directly employed" workers working in the state's 16,931 industrial units, the report says, 6.01 lakh workers are males, and just about 33,456 are females, making up 5.27 per cent of the total workforce.

This low number of female employment in the manufacturing industry has many reasons and one of the major reasons is regarding the health risk, gender biasness, sexual security etc. The effects of potential occupational hazards on women's reproductive health have been, probably, the major focus of concern in the health of women workers. This concern has increased in recent years as more environmental hazards are identified and as more women enter the paid workforce. A range of occupational reproductive hazards has been documented but a large number of possible risks still require further examination.

The first thing to do is to learn about the policies and practices in place, those that truly contribute to building a global and diverse workforce. While the manufacturing industry has come a long way and has evolved in its practices, I think we have some work to do in educating potential employees about the progressive policies and processes practised in the manufacturing industry.

The next thing to do is to position manufacturing as a great career option for women employees. The manufacturing sector is equal or better than the service organizations, specifically considering the focus the industry has on **SHE** (Safety, Health and Environment). Today, manufacturing is a progressive industry focused on global markets and offers immense, diverse opportunities to every employee, including women leaders.

Many organizations have adopted and developed inclusive workplaces and created an environment that is supportive for women. Extending parental leave, providing creative ways to build work-life balance are few ways the organizations have been working on. Companies across the world have focused on building encouraging flexible working policies.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

➤ *According to IRA-International Journal of Management & Social Sciences on Women Vs Men in Manufacturing Sector by Shamily Jaggi*

- 96% women brought out various challenges and issues being faced by women working in the Indian Manufacturing environment, posing a great hindrance for them in pursuing career in this sector or to say, any career at all. The biasness between men and women is the major factor which restricts and blocks all the opportunities for women. Women have to face discrimination at every step like at workplace, in education, in domestic life etc and the root of all kind of discriminations and bias against the women lies in the customs, traditions and the typical mindset of the society which looks the women as inferior beings, resulting in rise in the number of victimized women. Studies by Elson(1999), Mehra and Gammage(1999), OECD (2002) have found that gender gap exists in earnings even for same level of education, age and job tenure of women as compared to men.
- 73% respondents stated that Women are exploited at all levels and by each segment ,whether it is at their respective homes in form of domestic violence or marital rape or exploitation at work place in the form of physical and mental torture by the boss and colleagues. They are compelled to keep their head down in a speechless manner tolerating the cruelty of all. Ignorance, violence and crimes committed against women in India have emerged as alarming issue which reflects countries socio-economic disability which in turn, threatens the dignity and honour of womenfolk of the country. If women raise their voices against the crimes, then they cannot get justice despite their voices for survival. This ultimately affects their mentally stability and endurance, due to which they are often seen withdrawing themselves from the society, losing their self esteem or even resorting to suicide which often result as a matter of social disgrace.
- 63% of brought out that there appears to be a trend between the conservatism and wage gap between males and females. This pay gap and discrimination evokes a passionate debate. Women with equal education to men and in equal occupations are not generally rewarded with equal wages. Paci (2002) found that gender discrimination in wages and employment against women leads to a chain reaction of economic distortions which reduces efficiency and threatens economic development Women.
- 43% respondents stated that as there are very less number of females in the manufacturing sector, so the women who are working in this sector feel isolated as they find problems in mixing up with the men there. Every person at the work place especially in the manufacturing setup treats her as “woman” rather than a “Colleague” which makes her survival difficult and creates a challenge for her to prove at each opportunity.
- 79% respondents stated the one problem which needs much of attention is workplace flexibility. Due to odd

working hours in this sector and flexible workplace policies, women struggle a lot in making a right balance between her work and family. Adding a demanding boss, deadlines and ambition to succeed, resulted in generating causes which leave women to feel overwhelmed and guilty.

- 89% of women brought out that one of the evil of the modern society is the sexual harassment, molestation and eve teasing which women endures in the day to day environment including, at the workplace from their male counterparts and other members of the society.
- *According to SAFETY AND PERFORMANCE OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES AT THE WORK PLACE A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO MANGALORE CITY published on June 2016 by Mahammad Shahid*
- 80percent of respondents are satisfied with the physical safety or security, and only 20 percent of respondents are not satisfied.
- 25 percent of respondents are dissatisfied with the physical safety because of lack of employer concern towards the physical safety. Majority of respondents accounting for 75 percent are dissatisfied because of lack of protection from harassment.
- 72%of the respondents are dissatisfied with the environmental safety provided by their organization, and only 28% of the respondents are satisfied with their environmental facilities.
- 40 percent of respondents satisfied with the organizational safety and only 60 percent of respondents are having dissatisfied with the organizational safety provided. So it is found that majority of women employees are not satisfied with the organizational safety.
- 54 percent of respondents are dissatisfied because of lack of proper investigation of complaints, remaining 29 percent of respondents dissatisfied due to violating the code of conduct and 17 percent of respondents are unhappy with their dignity and respect in the organization.
- *According to a Journal of International Women's Studies-Occupational Health and Safety of Women Workers: Viewed in the Light of Labor Regulations published on Jan-2011*
- Women working in manufacturing sector face health problems and accidents in the workplace such as eye infection due to dust and wounds due to sharp objects and headache, respiratory diseases, skin allergies, and reproductive dysfunctions.
- The reason for the health problems were unhealthy and unsafe work and job conditions, and the lack of facilities such as washrooms and toilets. The physical facilities that are mandatory for a workplace were not fully considered.
- The women also complained of musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) such as low back pain, carpal tunnel syndrome, leg pain, and neck pain
- The study of Aganon (1994) is one of the earliest investigations on work conditions of women in export

zones in the Philippines. Aganon reported risks and unfavourable work conditions such as hazard exposure, wage violations, and harassment by management. In a subsequent study, Aganon, et al. in 1997 noted adverse working conditions such as night shifts, forced overtime work, health and safety problems, lack of reproductive rights, sexual and verbal harassment by employers, exposure to hazards, and weak or absence of labour organizing in the export zones.

- In a semiconductor manufacturing industry women face the reproductive system health problem and respiratory problem.
- The study shows that women feel gender discriminated and lesser chances of advancement in their career. Some of the garment establishments employed apprenticeship wherein workers under this scheme were given 75% of the minimum wage. Some women had been apprentices for several years despite mastery of required skills.
- The review also showed that women were not provided with sufficient personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gas mask, head cover, gloves, and protective clothing. There were also limited toilets and washrooms

➤ *BSR (NGO) HER project on Women's Safety in the Workplace Helping Business Prevent Sexual Harassment*

- According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) two kinds of sexual harassment takes place at work place a hostile environment for getting work done or humiliating the victim and quid pro quo.
- At maximum places sexual harassment is used a tool of dominance by men against women or in other words a tool to display the power.
- It is observed that working environments where women work under high pressure or are frequently stressed with facing the supervisors, tend to have more sexual harassment situation.
- The major problem of Sexual harassment it is always seen as hidden issue. Woman being abused sexually and mentally has been considered normal since long back both by women who are the victim in the society.
- Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act of 2013 protects women against sexual harassment at work by ensuring that employers both prevent and set up structures to address sexual harassment when it occurs. According to the Act, all businesses are required to:

1. Have an anti-sexual harassment policy with a clear definition of sexual harassment and penalties for perpetrators.
2. Establish and maintain an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) that addresses sexual harassment complaints.
3. Hold workshops and awareness-raising programs in the workplace that inform all workers of the workplace mechanisms available to prevent sexual harassment.
4. Heavy risk fines and licences cancellation are imposed to the industries which fail to fulfil these requirements.
5. Sexual harassment can take many different forms.

1. **PHYSICAL:** Unnecessary physical contact that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, stroking, leering, and winking.
2. **VERBAL:** Commenting on a worker's appearance or attractiveness; making sexual comments; making sexual innuendos; telling sexual jokes; insulting someone based on their sex or sexuality; introducing sexual topics into work discussions; asking for sexual favours in exchange for better treatment.
3. **PSYCHOLOGICAL** Implicit or expressed threats about a worker's future or employment status; implicit or expressed promise of preferential treatment; making a worker work unsociable hours; locking a worker in a room or in the factory.
4. **NONVERBAL/VISUAL** Showing sexually explicit materials; sending anonymous texts or letters; whistling.
  - BSR has developed this toolkit in partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), and in consultation with their members, to provide guidance for companies seeking to strengthen their own policies and activities that prevent and address sexual harassment.
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  - Specifically, this toolkit informs and guides factory management and staff on the following:
    1. Helping to answer the question "What is sexual harassment?"
    2. Creating a better understanding of the root causes of sexual harassment in the workplace
    3. Discussing the role of business in tackling sexual harassment
    4. Providing easy to use step-by-step guides on how to put key workplace structures in place
    5. Sharing interactive training sessions for top management and other employees
    6. Walking through model policies
    7. Preparing you for the outcomes of exposing sexual harassment

### III. BACKGROUND

FICCI (The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry) and FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) are two bodies which are dedicated to look into involvement of women to display their talents, experience and skills across all sectors. However, for creating gender equality through empowerment, safety and well-being of women is also crucial and fundamental. Due to the hike in the number of incidents of violence and harassment of women, FICCI and FLO felt the need to set up an Industry Task Force which would look into safety and security measures for women working in the industry. The FICCI-FLO Task Force was set up on December 24, 2012.

Over the past three decades, workplace has become a much more diverse environment. With women representing 24.4 per cent of the total workforce in India, personal

security has become central to their physical, intellectual, emotional, economic and spiritual well-being.

The suggested guidelines for the safety for women at the workplace are broadly categorized under four heads:

1. Physical
2. Environmental
3. Organizational
4. Educational

Each of the above heads has recommendations which are required and aspirational.

➤ *Physical*

The most important aspect for the security and safety of women is ensuring their physical safety in the working premises. The basic facilities which ensure the safety and security of women while working in the premises and while travelling from working place to residence and back are covered under physical safety.

Following pointers must be followed to take care of physical aspect of safety of women at workplace

It is mandatory for employer to collect the proof of identification such driver licences, passport etc. from the permanent as well as casual employees in the organization such drivers, security guards, site workers etc. employers must install CCTV (Closed Circuit Television) cameras which are operational all the time, at critical locations as well as entry/ exit, common passages, etc in the factories and industries. Apart from CCTV camera security entries and exit of the premises as well as areas of outer extents must be manned guarded also. Either electronic door should be installed through biometric scanner or key card scanner for access to the areas by authorized staff only. All company cabs/transport vehicles must be under GPS tracking along with panic buttons. All females must have facility and details to SMS Alerts / Information Systems. A thorough risk assessment of the neighbouring area is recommended to ascertain that stringent measures are in place to mitigate any security risk. Mobile Applications to be installed on employee phones for increased tracking and safety measures

➤ *Environmental*

Physical safety and security norms are covered under the environmental aspect of a company. Under This aspect hold the responsibility of ensuring some basic physical security standards being met in the premises.

Following pointers are included in this aspect:

- Displays clearly sharing the emergency contact numbers and a designated officer(s) available round the clock to be contacted in emergency
- All workplace, parking lots, staircase, cafeterias and change rooms must have proper lighting facilities and ventilation
- Toilets for women must be Separate from men and secure and close to their work station
- A strict security checks must be done on any visitors coming inside the company work area.

- Safe and secure company transport facility must be provided for women working in night shifts, from their home to workplace and opposite.
- Cabs and transport agencies must be given a thorough background checks before hiring
- Security staff and drivers to be employed only after police verification or to be recruited from reputed agencies that have such measures in place
- 24x7 transport helpdesk for drivers & staff / family members with dedicated emergency cab on standby for exigencies
- Emergency Response Systems to record and support any emergencies across group of employees
- Tracking of Ad-Hoc and No-Show staff transport users to drive more discipline in transport usage

➤ *Organizational*

It is the responsibility of the of the employer to look into creating a positive, healthy and safe environment for women to work in the company. Employers must ensure that women are treated with same dignity and given same space for their knowledge as the men in the company.

Following points must be taken into account by the employers:

- A code of conduct must be prepared by the employers stating the norms for male and female employees in the organisation. This code of conduct must be reviewed by the employer, employee representative and vendors annually.
- A compliance report must be maintained for ensuring the policies being followed which were laid down.
- Mode of Payment of salaries must be made such as to avoid any kind of harassment by supervisory staff over subordinate women employees/casual women employees
- Grievance redressal and Sexual harassment committees must report directly to the Managing Director or a senior member of the management and headed by a equal representatives
- Strict disciplinary action against those found violating the code of conduct to ensure that it is not repeated
- Organizations with pan-India presence to have regional heads as members of the committee
- The majority or at least two women to be on the committee, one from the staff and one from management
- Every office to have a representative reporting to the committee
- Every complaint verbal or written to be documented and investigated promptly by the committee and appropriate action must be taken irrespective of the person being a senior, supervisor, colleague, staff, customer or vendor
- Smaller organizations to be made to appoint an external sexual harassment committee
- Women employees to be assured of speedy redressal, confidentiality of their complaints and protection from reprisal

➤ *Educational Aspect*

This area concerns about the women employees working in the companies being aware about the committees and policies against sexual harassment and gender discrimination in the companies. It is to encourage the female workforce to feel free to report any instances of sexual abuse or discrimination through available proper channels. This aspect covers awareness of female workforce about various safety and security measures being taken by the company, about various emergency contact numbers, helpline numbers and contact persons in case of any sexual abuse or harassment instance.

This also makes female aware about the complaint procedure and process to be followed and channels to report regarding sexual harassment faced by the employee. Female workforce training is also covered under educational aspect regarding rights and duties and policies and various provisions related to safety, health and security that the company has taken for the women to work freely in the company.

**IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

- Research Type : Analytical and Qualitative research
- Data Source : Primary Sources
- Data collection method: survey
- Population: Female workers in Bharuch district and if possible also from Gurgaon
- Sampling Technique : Convenience sampling
- Sampling Sample Size : 37 respondents
- Data collection instrument : Questionnaire(digital or hard copy)

**V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

*1. Age:-*

| Age Group    | Respondent | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| 18-25        | 17         | 45.9       |
| 26-35        | 15         | 40.5       |
| 36-45        | 4          | 10.8       |
| 46-55        | 1          | 2.7        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>37</b>  | <b>100</b> |

Analysis of the study shows that major section of women working in the manufacturing sector from age group of 18-25years.

*2. Exploitation at workplace:-*

This focuses on whether women working in the manufacturing industry have ever faced any kind of exploitation-which may be physical or mental at workplace.

| Exploitation | Respondent | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| YES          | 6          | 16.2       |
| NO           | 27         | 73         |
| MAY BE       | 4          | 10.8       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>37</b>  | <b>100</b> |

Analysis of the study shows that 73 per cent of women working in the manufacturing sector have never faced any kind of exploitation at workplace.

*3. Provision of lady Doctor:-*

This focuses on knowing whether the premises in which the female is working in manufacturing sector company has the a female doctor available for health check up

| Availability of Female doctor | Respondent | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|
| YES                           | 33         | 89.2       |
| NO                            | 4          | 10.8       |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>37</b>  | <b>100</b> |

Analysis of the study shows that 89.2 per cent of women working in the manufacturing sector claim that there is a female doctor for health check-up at workplace.

*4. Information about grievance readdressal cell:-*

It is to know whether the employers have given a proper training and information about how and where and female employee can get his grievances registered and sorted.

| Informed and Trained | Respondent | Percentage |
|----------------------|------------|------------|
| YES                  | 30         | 83.3       |
| NO                   | 6          | 16.7       |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>36</b>  | <b>100</b> |

Analysis of the study shows that 83.3per cent of women working in the manufacturing sector claim that they are aware about the grievance readdressal cell.

*5. Informed and trained about POSH:-*

For knowing whether the female working in manufacturing sector are having the information about prevention of sexual harassment committee and whether the employers are making sure that each women knows where to approach in case of any sexual harassment.

| Informed and Trained | Respondent | Percentage |
|----------------------|------------|------------|
| YES                  | 35         | 94.6       |
| NO                   | 2          | 5.4        |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>37</b>  | <b>100</b> |

Analysis of the study shows that 94.6 per cent of women working in the manufacturing sector are aware about the POSH.

*6. Parity in salary or promotion with male counterparts:-*

This focuses to understand if women working in the manufacturing sector have face any discrimination related to salary or promotion as compared to male working at the same situation.

| Parity       | Respondent | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| YES          | 8          | 21.6       |
| NO           | 21         | 56.8       |
| MAY BE       | 8          | 21.6       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>29</b>  | <b>100</b> |

The result of the data show that majority of the women feel that they have not faced discrimination in manufacturing sector in terms of salary or promotion as compared to their male counterpart.

7. *Separate pick and drop facility for women:-*

To know if the employer provides are separate pick and drop facility for the females working in the manufacturing units.

| Separate Pick and Drop | Respondent | Percentage |
|------------------------|------------|------------|
| YES                    | 17         | 45.9       |
| NO                     | 20         | 54.1       |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>37</b>  | <b>100</b> |

Analysis shows that some companies in the industry provide with a separate pick and drop for females while other do not. However the majority female which is 54.1 per cent do not have a separate pick and drop facility.

8. *Involvement of women in decision making process*

This parameter in manufacturing sector companies reflects satisfaction of women related to the security in job.

| Involvement  | Respondent | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Maximum      | 9          | 25         |
| Average      | 22         | 61.1       |
| Minimum      | 5          | 13.9       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>36</b>  | <b>100</b> |

As the analysis of the data shows that women workforce finds that where a decision making process is involved their contribution is Average which contributes to 61.1% of the total.

9. *Provision for separate sick rooms for women*

To check the basic availability of separate sick rooms for women where during the working hours a female can properly rest in case of any sickness during the working hours.

| Separate Sick Room | Respondent | Percentage |
|--------------------|------------|------------|
| YES                | 17         | 47.2       |
| NO                 | 19         | 52.8       |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>36</b>  | <b>100</b> |

10. *Training regarding safety education for women*

To know if trainings are provided for the education of women regarding safety and security in the manufacturing sector is being provided by the employer periodically.

| Training     | Respondent | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| YES          | 28         | 75.7       |
| NO           | 9          | 24.3       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>37</b>  | <b>100</b> |

As per the data received, 75.7 per cent of the women claim that they have received training regarding safety education for women periodically.

11. *Adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) for women*

Manufacturing sector requires women to be also in field job in various different sets of plants. Appropriate adequate Personal protective kits are needed that should be designed for women.

| PPE          | Respondent | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| YES          | 23         | 62.2       |
| NO           | 14         | 37.8       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>37</b>  | <b>100</b> |

Analysis shows that majority of women receive the PPE kits designed for women.

12. *Proper washrooms, change rooms and toilet facilities*

Manufacturing sector companies require shift jobs and for both men and women and also while working in manufacturing areas employees need to change uniforms. Also this focuses on knowing whether the separate facilities of change rooms, toilets and washrooms are available for women.

| Separate Facilities | Respondent | Percentage |
|---------------------|------------|------------|
| YES                 | 34         | 91.9       |
| NO                  | 3          | 8.1        |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>37</b>  | <b>100</b> |

As per the data analysis majority employers in manufacturing sector provide the facilities proper washrooms, change rooms and toilet facilities separate for women.

13. *Availability of female security and physician during night shift*

Due to approval of the night shifts for women working in manufacturing sector, employers must look into the availability of female staffs in security and other service departments during night shifts.

| Female security staff | Respondent | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|
| YES                   | 31         | 86.1       |
| NO                    | 5          | 13.9       |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>36</b>  | <b>100</b> |

#### 14. Satisfaction with work timings and flexibility in work timings

| Satisfaction | Respondent | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Highly       | 12         | 32.4       |
| Average      | 22         | 59.5       |
| Dissatisfied | 3          | 8.1        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>37</b>  | <b>100</b> |

Results show that majority of the woman working in the manufacturing sector are satisfied to an average level regarding work timings and flexibility in the same.

#### 15. Workplace equipment and machineries are designed such that woman can operate safely

| Female security staff | Respondent | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|
| YES                   | 17         | 47.2       |
| NO                    | 19         | 52.8       |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>36</b>  | <b>100</b> |

## VI. FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

- Majority of the respondents have never faced any kind of physical or mental exploitation at workplace. This suggests that female have less exploited environment in manufacturing industries.
- A major part of female workforce is aware about the POSH, also about the grievance readdressal cell, and the contact person details for reporting any abuse or harassment.
- According to the responses majority of the employers in the manufacturing industries have Lady doctor available for check up, and adequate PPE kits designed for females, proper change areas separate for women and female security staff during night shift.
- Majority of the respondent are being trained about the safety of women at workplace and also regarding the handling of hazardous chemicals and equipment's.
- The concerning negative responses according to majority respondents which is reason of dissatisfaction are:
  1. Separate pick and drop facility for women
  2. Involvement of women in decision making process
  3. Provision for separate sick rooms for women
  4. Workplace equipment and machineries are not designed such that woman can operate safely
  5. work timings and flexibility in work timings

## VII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Due to fewer ratios of female employees in manufacturing sector it was difficult to get number of responses.
- Employees could not give responses freely as the impact was directly on the employers of the industry
- Due to Online survey only the ground working female staff could not be covered

## VIII. SUGESSTION

- Companies in manufacturing sectors must promote the hiring of female workforce in core manufacturing jobs
- Must arrange for separate facilities for women to make female workforce more secure in industrial work area.
- Women should be given much more participation in decision making process.
- Companies must conduct he survey off women safety more often

## IX. CONCLUSION

Manufacturing being the core of any nation's economy requires a complete balance in every face. Such a balance must be made in gender equality as well. Organizations in manufacturing sector are required to step up to create an environment which is safe and secure for women to participate with equal capacities as men in the same field.

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