

Emerging Mall Culture: A Study of WLB among Married Working Women behind the Glittering Facade of Mall in Patna

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Globalization has resulted in new market structures such as supermarkets, departmental stores, hypermarkets, specialty shops, and malls. For modern retailing to thrive, employees must be creative, good communicators, and interpersonally skilled. Women are considered more suitable for certain roles in retail because of their ability to be pleasant and patient with customers. Due to their capacity to provide emotional labour, women are an ideal choice for shopping mall jobs. However, many of these individuals find the work challenging.

Objective: Therefore, the present study was conducted to understand the economic profile and employment challenges of married women worker in shopping malls in Patna and also analyse whether working conditions adversely affect the work life balance among married working women in malls.

Methodology: The study was conducted at shopping malls in Patna,

Result: it was found that shopping malls provide women with new opportunities for employment. Apart from these opportunities they also face many challenges in economic as well as professional life. They are employed as sales officers, saleswomen's, security guards and sweepers in malls. Most of the women employees were in between 18 to 35 years age, and they were educated up to 10+2 level, graduate level, and some of them even hold postgraduate degrees. Despite operating in large cities, shopping malls do not pay their employees a handsome salary in accordance to their working hours and hard work and do not provide a conducive environment for their well-being during both menstruation and pregnancy.

Keywords: - Globalization, shopping mall, Economic profile, Employment challenges and married working women.

INTRODUCTION

The workplace has long been recognised by sociologists as a central site for the emergence of social inequalities. Studies of informal workers have showed us how race, class, and gender hierarchies are produced through the social organization of the work. The mall culture in India is witnessing a metamorphosis from unexciting shopping activities to making shopping an enjoyable and lavish experience in this fast-paced world of the future. In the Indian market, this new way of living has brought about a kind of revolution. Additionally, this new-fangled culture has grown at a staggering rate all across India, especially in the metropolitan areas. Basically, "Shopping centres" originated in North America at the early years of the twentieth century as enlarged supermarkets that draw together a small number of stores. While the first "shopping mall" opened in 1956 in the same region, they have spread over other major markets during 1970s (Feinberg and Meoli 1991).

The growth of modern retail has paved way for the escalating development of shopping malls in India. With just 3 shopping malls in the 1990's – Spencer Plaza (Chennai), Crossroads (Mumbai) and Ansal Plaza (New Delhi), the country at present boasts of 470 operational malls and is estimated to have 720 operational shopping malls by the year 2016 (Malls of India, 2014). Retail sector has two parts, Unorganised retail sector and Organised retail sector. Shopping malls comes under organised retail sector, and workers of this sector known as informal workers. Organized retailing and mall development is growing at an exponential pace in India. Recent years have witnessed major infrastructural developments coupled with demographic changes. Malls and supermarkets are no longer popular only in metropolitan cities. Increase in income levels in smaller cities also (Dwivedi, 2010). The Indian retail sector is estimated to grow by \$ 200 billion, with organized retailing

comprising 3 per cent or \$ 6.4 billion of market share. The organized retail is growing at the rate of 25 – 30 per cent annually (FICCI, 2005) with significant importance being given to mall development. (KPMG International, 2010).

Organized corporate retailing appears to be on its way to becoming the industry of the decade in India. Retail represents approximately ten percent of India's GDP and six to seven percent of its employment. With 15,000,000 retail outlets, India has the world's highest retail density. Despite this, just 4% of these stores are larger than 500 square feet, and they are almost all family-owned (Mukherjee and Patel 2005). The appearance of international firms, as well as growing modernization tendencies, have had an impact on the entire country. Shopping malls that provide consumers climatic comfort and freedom from noise and traffic are centres for social and recreational activities as well as shopping. Shopping malls across the country have given a new dimension to the consumer's shopping experience. Malls have transformed the once compulsive and sober shopping into a family entertainment and as a weekend pastime. (Telci, 2012) Shopping malls in India did not exist until the late 1990s and early 2000s. Their fast development in India is closely tied to the country's market liberalisation agenda in the 1990s, which includes a 51 percent FDI cap in joint ventures in 2006. (Singh and Srinivasan, 2012). The country's cultural and social institutions have been greatly impacted by the ensuing development in modern retail. In reality, in post-globalisation India, the synthesising of material and cultural forces in urban and semi-urban lives has been acknowledged as a major goal of retail behemoths. Dipayan Baishya records clear goals of retail icon Kishore Biyani, CEO, Future Group, India, who started out in the 1990s with the goal of conquering 'the entire Indian consumption space' in a book titled *It Happened in India* (2007), published quite early in India's economic trajectory of consumer-culture and retail expansion (Biyani and Baishya, 2007). Biyani's company opened some of India's first 'super stores,' which catered to a wide range of consumer requirements and desires, including clothing, furniture, food, and even insurance. More crucially, Biyani's conceptualization of these megastores (such as Pantaloons, Big Bazaar, and Central, all owned by the Future group) or shopping malls involved consumption habits by social units, notably families, in the country's growing retail business.

P&M Mall is the first mall of Patna, the capital city of the eastern Indian state Bihar. It was opened in April 2011. India's first 'Khadi Mall' opened in Patna (Capital of Bihar) in 2019. The mall is a multi-storeyed building and is the biggest store of khadi products in the country and is located on the eastern side of the historic Gandhi Maidan. The shopping complex houses diverse items and in promoting items produced by regional artisans and craftsmen.
(<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/patna/nitish-opens-countrys-first-khadi-mall/articleshow/71928506.cms>)

This paper seeks to address these issues through an analysis of work and employment in one of the new workplaces that have emerged in the context of India's economic liberalisation, viz, organised retail and shopping malls. The aim is to shed light on the role of emerging labour processes, organisation of work and new workplace cultures of the shopping mall.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Nandini Gooptu's research provides insights into the way work in malls contributed to an ethos of self-reliance, hard work, and an apparently apolitical agenda of self-growth, delinked from policy interventions/expectations from a minimised State, from the perspective of analysing employment, self-perception, and the furthering of 'neoliberal governmentality' through malls (and the retail industry in general). Gooptu saw this as a step ahead in the manufacture of compliant workers who would carry forward a new work culture, which was vital for the corporate sector's goal to be advanced in post-globalization India (Gooptu, 2009).

Telci enlighten in his article that, Shopping malls offer climatic comfort, noise and traffic-free environments are hubs for social and recreational activities in addition to retail. Consumer patronage of these enclosed retail settings is becoming more academic as they expand in number and range in size and variation from one another. While numerous studies have been conducted to determine the factors that influence mall patronage, little attention has been paid to the implications of this behaviour. The purpose of this study is to add to the body of knowledge by highlighting the negative aspects of growing mall patronage. Consumers' materialism and compulsive consuming tendencies are likely to be stimulated by high shopping mall patronage levels. Furthermore, for individuals, these effects are predicted to be larger. (Telci, 2012).

Ghosh explained in the research paper that, many changes have occurred as the result of global culture in our economy, society, culture, and politics. Many people believe that the resilience that Indian culture once possessed is currently eroding. However, this article contends that globalisation is not a one-way street, and that there are various divergent paths that have resulted in opposing reactions. As a result, in addition to homogenising certain features of Indian culture, globalisation has aided in the rapid expansion of self-awareness and cultural identities. Diversity is proliferating as a result of growing inequities among different segments of the Indian people and the resulting unevenness in the spread of a global culture. (Ghosh, 2011).

Objective:

1. To examine economic profile and the employment challenges among married working women of Patna’s malls
2. To analyse whether working conditions adversely affect the work life balance among married working women in malls.

METHODOLOGY

The data are collected from the sample of married women workers (N= 85) in seven shopping malls located at different parts of the city (i.e., Patna). This is also the capital of Bihar, and it has the largest number of shopping malls in the state. Random sampling has been used for this study. **Seven malls** were randomly selected for the study. Among all selected shopping mall, the primary data were collected from the ‘Security Guard’ and ‘Married Saleswomen’ employees working therein. Besides this, primary data was collected from the respondents with the help of structured questionnaire.

Why only married women worker of the mall?

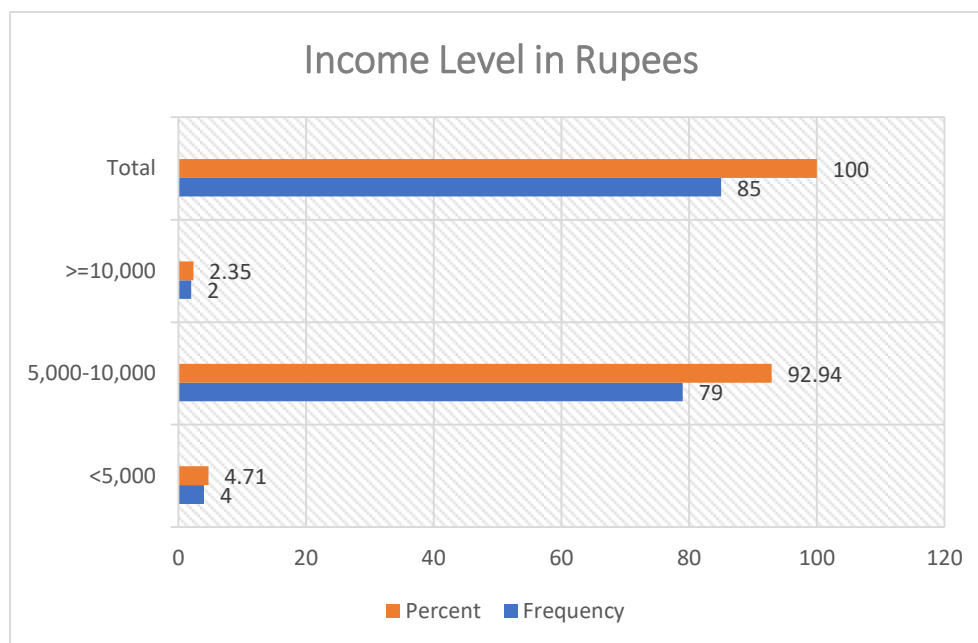
Bihar belongs to one of the BIMARU state. Where female labour force participation is very low. Socio- culture environment of the society is to get married their girl child as soon as possible. Most of the women, who works in this sector were from 18 to 35 years of age group. Married women who works in this sector whether they have very young children or for those women who have newly married, societal as well familial pressure to get conceive as early as possible. To get continue job during pregnancy is a very big challenges, as there is no relaxation as well as job security in this sector. Informal Women worker, face the triple burden of work i.e, “reproductive work, productive work, and managing work”(Mitra, 2005, p. 294)

Analysis and Interpretation of the study:

Economic profile of married working women in Patna Malls

Table 1

| Income Level in Rupees | <i>frequency</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <5,000 | 4 | 4.71 |
| 5,000-10,000 | 79 | 92.94 |
| >=10,000 | 2 | 2.35 |
| Total | 85 | 100 |



Source- Primary Data

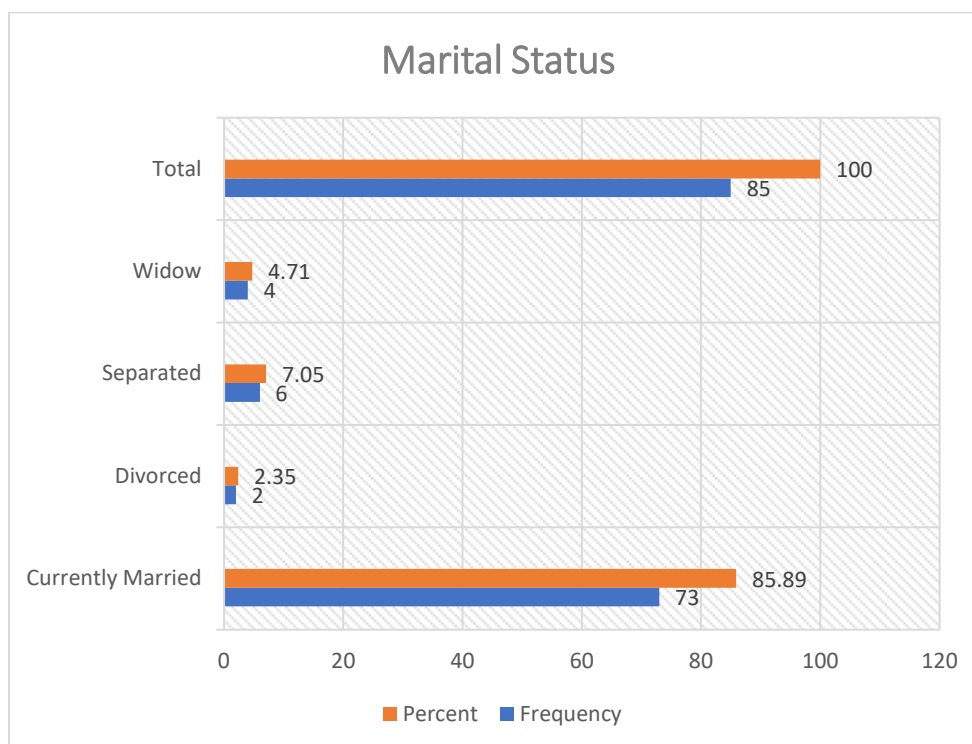
In table - 1, It was found that in the shopping malls, highest percentage of women employees 92.94 percent were getting money between 5,000 to 10,000 rupees, 4.71 percent of the women were getting less than ₹5,000 and 2.35 percent of them were in managerial post and they were getting equal or more than 10,000 rupees.

Marital Status

Table-2

| Marital Status | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| Currently Married | 73 | 85.89 |
| Divorced | 2 | 2.35 |
| Separated | 6 | 7.05 |
| Widow | 4 | 4.71 |
| Total | 85 | 100 |

Source- Primary Data



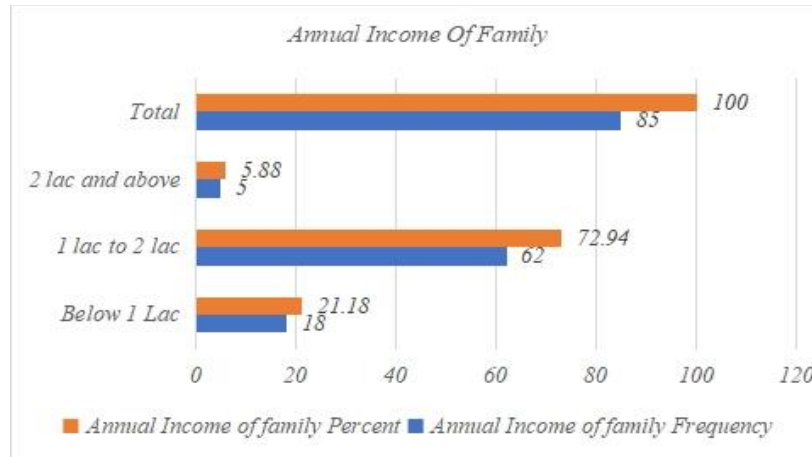
In Table-2, Among all ever married women, the highest 85.89 percent of women were currently married and 2.35 percent were divorced, 7.05 percent were separated, 4.71 percent of women were widow.

Annual Income of Family

Table-3

| In Rupees | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------|-----------|---------|
| Below 1 lac | 18 | 21.18 |
| 1 lac to 2 lac | 62 | 72.94 |
| 2 lac and above | 5 | 5.88 |
| Total | 85 | 100 |

Source- Primary Data
Graph



In Table-3, During study it has been found that the highest 72.94 percent Women were having Family annual income between 1,00,000 to 2,00,000 rupees. 21.18 percent of women were having family annual income of less than 1,00,000 rupees and only 5.88 percent women were having their family income more than 2,00,000 rupees income.

Challenges for married women worker of the mall:

Poor working conditions are main global employment challenge. Progress in reducing unemployment globally is not being matched by improvements in the quality of work, says the (International Labour Organization’s World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2019 report). Employment challenges for married women worker in malls are very high. Most laws given the contractual or temporary nature of their work do not protect women worker in the informal sector. Even if awareness does exist about the applicability of certain laws, they are neither observed by employers nor demanded by the workers. because of a surplus of available labour in these occupations, the odds are stacked heavily against the women workers who can easily be replaced by others who do not demand a higher wage, better hours, or safe working conditions (Banerjee, 2002).

Distance between Workplace and home

Table-4

| Distance between Workplace and home | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Distance | Frequency | Percent |
| <2 km | 22 | 25.89 |
| 2 to 4 km | 39 | 45.88 |
| >4 km | 24 | 28.23 |
| Total | 85 | 100 |

Source- Primary Data

Graph

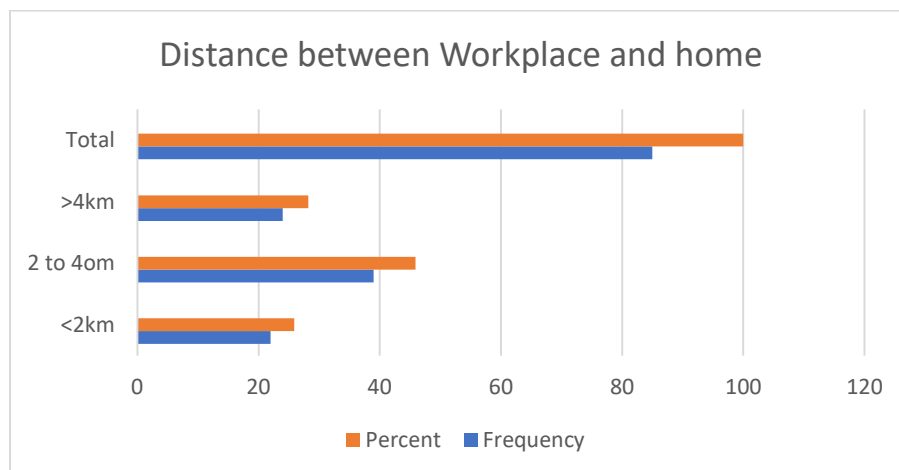


Table 4 shows that how much distance a married working women travel to reach their workplace. 25.89 percent of women live within 2 kilometres of their workplace, the highest 45.88 percent of women live 2 to 4 kilometres far from their workplace while 28% of women live more than 4 kilometres far from their workplace. During study they revealed that, most of them where migrant from another place and so they were living in rental house, so where they got rental house in very less amount, they started to live that place.

Working Hours

Table 5

| Working Hours | | |
|---------------|-----------|---------|
| No. of hours | Frequency | Percent |
| 8 hrs | 12 | 14.11 |
| <8 hrs | 0 | 0 |
| >8 hrs | 73 | 85.89 |
| Total | 85 | 100 |

Source- Primary Data
Graph

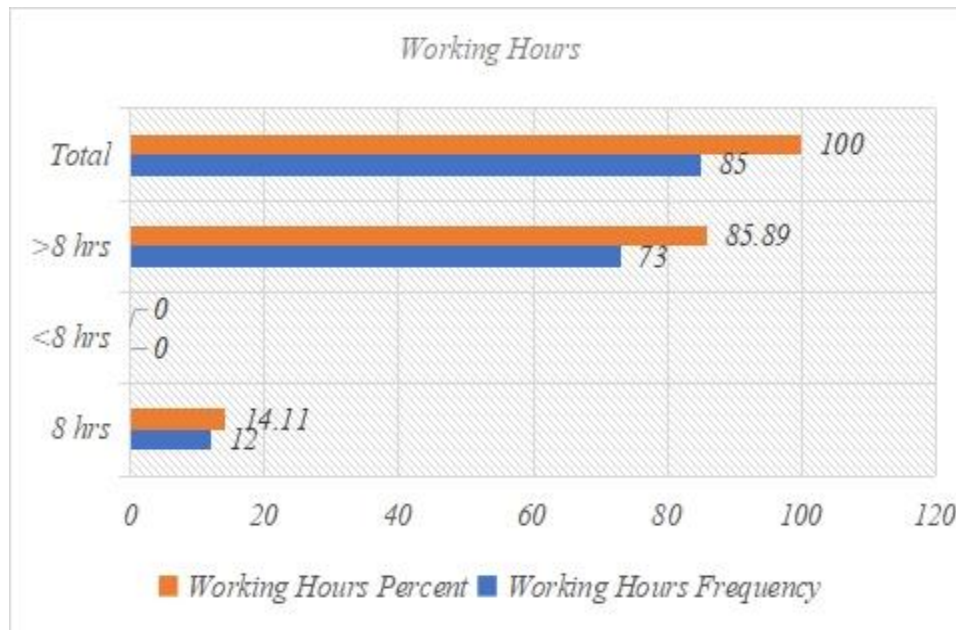


Table 5 explained about the working hours of woman mall worker. During study it has been found that there was no worker who works less than 8 hours per day. 14.11 percent of women work for approx. 8 hours per day and 85.89 percent of women were working for more than 8 hours. This data reveals that how they can work continuously for 8 hours and more than 8 hours. this is really a very big challenge for a woman.

Availability of Sitting Chair During Working Period

Table 6

| Availability of Sitting Chair During Working Period | | |
|---|-----------|---------|
| Availability | Frequency | Percent |
| Yes | 13 | 15.30 |
| No | 72 | 84.70 |
| Total | 85 | 100 |

Source- Primary Data

Graph

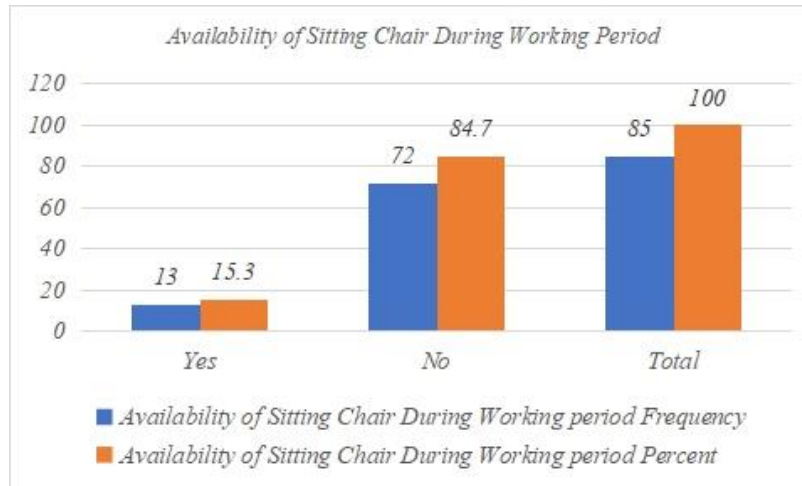


Table 6 is explained that availability of sitting chair during working hours for women worker in mall, during the study it has been found that only 15.30 percent of women revealed that they were getting chair during their working hours. While the 84.70 percent of women denied that they were not getting any type of sitting chair to sit. Some of them revealed verbally that if we sit then then manager will cut their salary. This is really a very big challenge for a woman to stand for 8 hours and more than 8 hours continuously because biologically also during menstrual cycle as well as during pregnancy for their physically wellbeing there were the need of some relaxation.

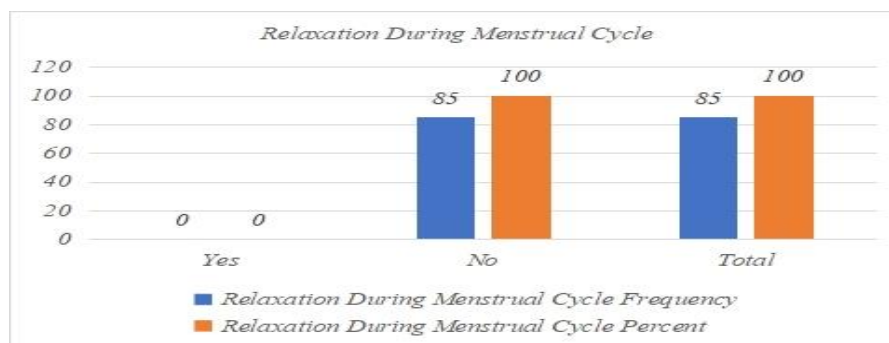
Relaxation During Menstrual Cycle

Table 7

| Table 7 Relaxation During Menstrual Cycle | | |
|---|-----------|---------|
| Relaxation | Frequency | Percent |
| Yes | 0 | 0 |
| No | 85 | 100 |
| Total | 85 | 100 |

Source-Primary Data

Graph



In table -7 the question related to menstrual cycle were asked to the respondent and they answered that during menstrual cycle they do not get any type of relaxation. In mall, women workers work for 8 hours, or more than 8 hours and it is a very big challenge for themselves. During field study many respondents were asking to me that I went there from some government sector, and I will provide them some type of job in which they can do work and also they can be relaxed in there working hours.

Obligation or Penalty During Work

Table-8

| Obligation or Penalty During Work | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Obligation or Penalty | Frequency | Percent |
| Yes | 37 | 43.53 |
| No | 48 | 56.47 |
| Total | 85 | 100 |

Source- Primary Data

Graph

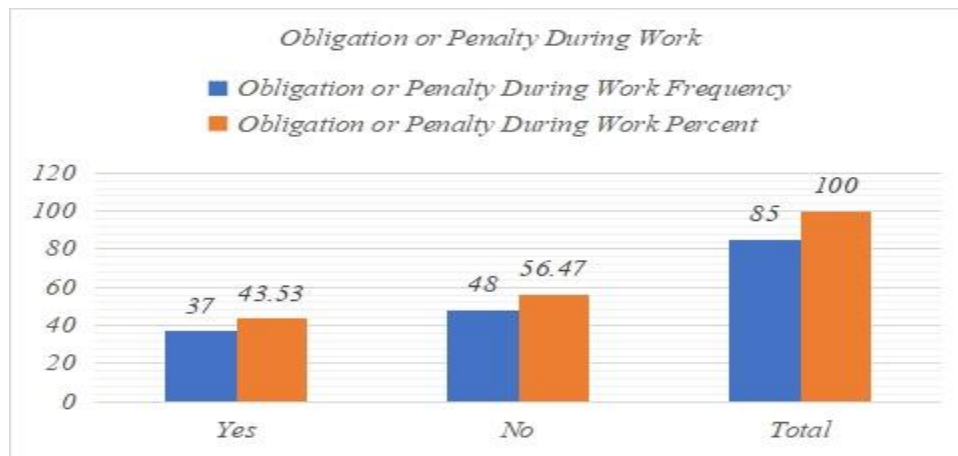


Table 8 explained about their working condition, in this question 43.53 percent of women worker revealed that they or their some of the colleagues faced obligation or given penalty for the material during work. While 56.47 percent worker never faced this situation.

Table-9

| Table-9 Discrimination at Workplace | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Type of Discrimination | Frequency | Percent |
| Sexual | 0 | 0 |
| Physical | 3 | 3.54 |
| Verbal abuse | 12 | 14.11 |
| No | 70 | 82.35 |
| Total | 85 | 100 |

Source-Primary Data

Graph

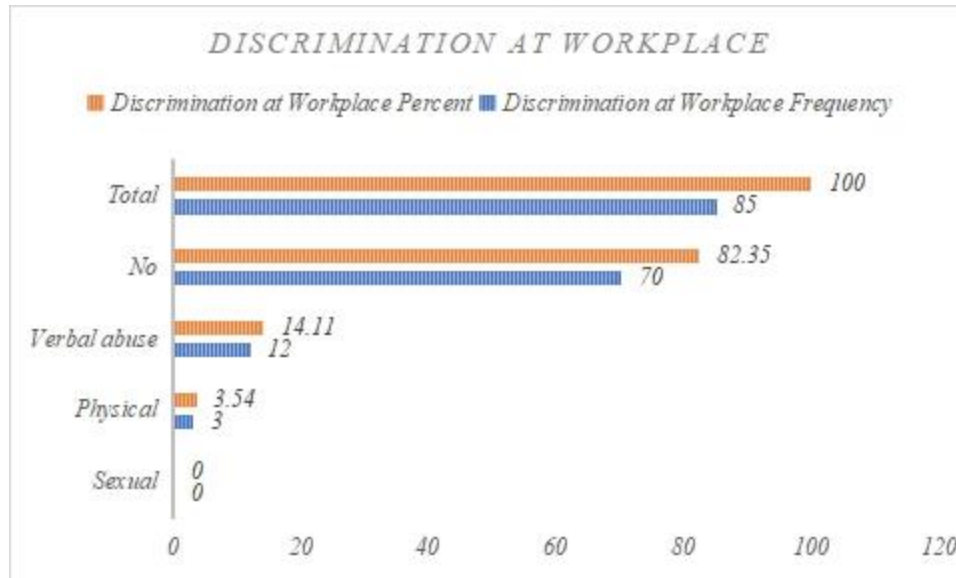


Table- 9 is explained about different types of discrimination at workplace. Among all of them, no respondent was faced sexual discrimination. 3.54 percent of respondents explained about physical discrimination. 14.11 percent of respondents revealed about verbal abuse at workplace and 82.35 percent denied about any type of discrimination at workplace.

DISCUSSIONS

Payment benefits and working conditions are those areas which makes evident the disadvantages of working in this informal job. Even so, jobs in retail have very few extrinsic rewards, and offer limited opportunities for mobility or advancement. Apart from the structured questionnaires, during discussion many of them, women workers revealed that mall administration used to give priority to unmarried and young women. And all women who were married most of them were below 35 years' age.

SUGGESTIONS

According to data literacy rate of women in India have increased and even number of graduate and postgraduate girls are also very high, but still in India female labour force participation is in decreasing Trend. So, government should focus on some points such as:-

- In India mall cultures is in increasing trend so the women who are working there should give in facility related to their job security as well as their good salary according to their hard work.
- For pregnant women benefit should be given according to the law of maternity, so that female could continue her job after delivery of child also.
- Creche facility should be provide at this place also.

Constrained choice, limited contacts of women and physical segmentation of the labour market perpetuate forces that entrap women workers in a low-income situation with worse outcomes than those of their male counterparts. Consequently, with greater intensity of work they still continue to receive low wages, while residual participation in the labour market restricts the possibilities of skill formation and upward mobility. All these factors offer a substantive basis for policy recommendation.

CONCLUSION

Most of the research on retail stores or shopping malls considers them sites of consumption or consumers place, but stores are also workplaces. Retail work makes up an increasing proportion of the jobs in our economy. These all-selected malls represent a range of working condition in large retail mall sector establishment. Consumers in Patna have identified shopping malls as the most important site for cultural engagement, societal connection, and leisure time spent in the name of shopping, according to the findings. The purchasing power of the respondents was found to be related to their income.

According to the findings, Patna inhabitants have adopted a new way of life as a result of the Mall Culture, in which shopping has become a status symbol rather than a necessity. Women in the retail industry are paid significantly less than men for the same job. So, throughout the field study, respondents were looking for a new job with a higher wage because they do not receive any rest during working hours in the mall, making it difficult for them to subsist on a low salary, and the sector is not hospitable to women employees. Women are finding new opportunities for work in shopping malls. In malls, women account for about 40% of the workforce. Sales officers, salesgirls, security guards, and sweepers are among the jobs they hold. Women account for nearly half of all salespeople. The majority of female employees are young and educated, ranging in age from 18 to 35 years old. Despite the fact that shopping malls are located in major cities, they hire a huge number of women. According to study, managers believe that women are humble by nature, which is why they give women first priority in hiring. Young married women also work in the shopping malls. During the research, it was discovered that most of the women who work as sweepers and security guards migrated from rural areas; they migrated by marriage, and in some cases, they are part of the second generation of migrants.

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