**Research Paper**

# "Socio-Economic Status of Orgnised Working Women in India: A Study of Raichur City".

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*ABSTRACT:*
*The main objective of the study was to understand the problems and issues faced by the organised working women in India. The objectives also included identifying the key socio-economic attributes contributing to women's status, safety and security, and to study women's involvement in various activities/ organizations for improving of family, community and society. The study was confined to the organised working women in white collared jobs in the city of Kalaburai, India. A mixed methods approach involving face to face interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaire technique including both close-ended and open-ended questions was chosen for effective elicitation of data from the respondents. Methods triangulation was adapted for establishing validity and reliability of the study. The study was based on primary data collected from Kalaburai city to find out the possible solutions for working women which could help them to overcome the problems that they face in the workplace.*
*Keywords: Organised working women, problems and issues, family, community and society etc.*

## I.    INTRODUCTION:

In the history of human development, women have been as vital in the history making as men have been. In fact higher status for women vis-à-vis employment and work performed by them in a society is a significant indicator of a nation's overall progress. Undoubtedly, without the active participation of women in national activities, the social, economic or political progress of a country will deteriorate and become stagnant. But ironically and tragically, women employees in general, are not taken very seriously by their superiors, colleagues, or society at large. Having a career poses challenges for women due to their family responsibilities. Traditionally Indian women had been home makers but in the recent decades, proper education and better awareness, in addition to the ever increasing cost of living has made them to go out and choose careers. In a patriarchal society like India it is still believed that a man is the primary bread winner of his family.

Although Indian women have started working outside their homes but still they have a long way to go both culturally, socially and economically, to bring in positive attitudinal changes in the mind-set of people.

It is generally perceived that gender bias against working women starts right from the stage of recruitment. Most of the Indian men are not ready to accept that women are capable enough to work side by side with men in all the sectors, other than in a few limited ones like teaching, nursing and in clerical sectors. Their capabilities are generally underestimated as a result of which Indian women have a tendency to opt for less demanding jobs even if they are highly qualified.

**Rationale and Significance of the Study:**

Educated organised women are presumed to be more aware of the opportunities and challenges of the workplace or educated organised women can better understand their roles and limitations in the workplaces and are perceived to be bold enough to develop their own personalities, with or without encouragement from their families. An assessment of the problems and issues plaguing organised working women is therefore a necessity for better understanding of workplace dynamics related to women. During earlier days there were some man-made boundaries for women but now women play vital roles in different sectors. Women today are breaking that boundary and are playing the dual role of balancing domestic life as well as professional life, giving a boost to their societal status in the process. The major problems for working women arise out of the dual

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responsibilities of the working woman - domestic work as well as office work. Though more and more women are coming out in search of paid employment and their families also need their income, the attitude towards women and their role in the family has not undergone much change. Women continue to be perceived as weak, inferior, and second-class citizens. Even today, looking after the family and children is generally perceived to be the primary responsibility of the man.

Participation of women in prominent decision-making positions is limited by severe cultural and social constraints because men think that women are not capable enough to take a good decision. Women face challenges all over the world and sometimes these challenges are context specific. The literature on the challenges and problems women face at the workplace is not only limited to women in the unorganized sectors, but also in formal organizations to as women continue trying to contribute to their quality of life and that of their families and thereby to the economies of various countries through work.

Unemployment and temporary work are more common among women than among men. Most women workers do not have any social security or access to health care benefits. As a result, the work-related illnesses, like mental pressure and other health problems, remain hidden. As per available research, a large number of women workers complain of frequent headaches, back pain, circulatory disorders, fatigue, and emotional and mental disorders resulting from performing various activities at the workplace.

The present study therefore aims at finding out if women face challenges in the workplaces which pose problems for them, and what are those particular challenges that women face working in the various sectors and what credible solutions and coping mechanisms can be offered to help them lessen such problems, so that women can understand their own value and ability to face problems in different ways. The study also aims at finding the problems of different age group working women and different categories of women like single, married, separate/divorcee, widow etc. Understanding the problems in a clear way would assist us in finding adequate answers in reducing the problems.

## Research Problems:
The study evinces the following research problems for the study at hand related to problems and challenges faced by working women in the workplace:

- Balancing between paid employment and family care.

- Work related stress problems faced by working women.

- Victims of physical harassment and unfair treatment in the workplace.

- Tolerance of abuse, violence, harassment and discrimination.

- Sexual harassment, mental pressure and safety problems.

- Prejudiced and stereotyped thinking faced by working women.

## Objectives of the Study:
**The study attempts to address the following key research objectives:**
o To gain knowledge about the problems and challenges faced by organised working women in the workplace.
o To identify the key socio-economic pointers contributing to women's status, safety and security.
o To find out possible solutions that could help them to overcome the problems that they face in the workplace.

## Research Methodology:
The study is exploratory in nature and seeks to identify the problems and challenges faced by organised women in teaching professional sectors. Further the study also aims at finding out the organizational supports for women employees so that the women employees are able to give their best to their organization and are able to reach their full potential. The present study surveyed only organised women employees in white collared jobs who have been in their jobs for at least six months. The study was conducted within Raichur city.

## Data collection process:
Both qualitative and quantitative aspects have been taken into consideration for the study. The methodology followed was a questionnaire-based survey among the organised working women of the selected

localities, in addition to face to face interviews and FGDs. The questionnaire (Appendix -1) consisted of 20 items on various aspects of the study in addition to the demographic details of the respondents.

Data were collected using the personal contact approach. Questionnaires were distributed to a sample of 100 working women located in Raichur city, out of which 75 valid and complete responses were returned. Each of these 75 women was interacted with and interviewed face to face. Some related questions were asked of them and the comments noted down. In addition to face to face interviews, two focus group discussions were conducted with eight women in each group. These discussions also elicited information and data that have been discussed in the next chapter. Different methods were used for collecting data on the working women.
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The graphical representation of each of the items is given below: How long did it take for you to get promoted in comparison to male colleagues of the same position?

**Table 1.1:**
**Time taken for Women to get promoted as compared to their male colleagues (in nos.)**

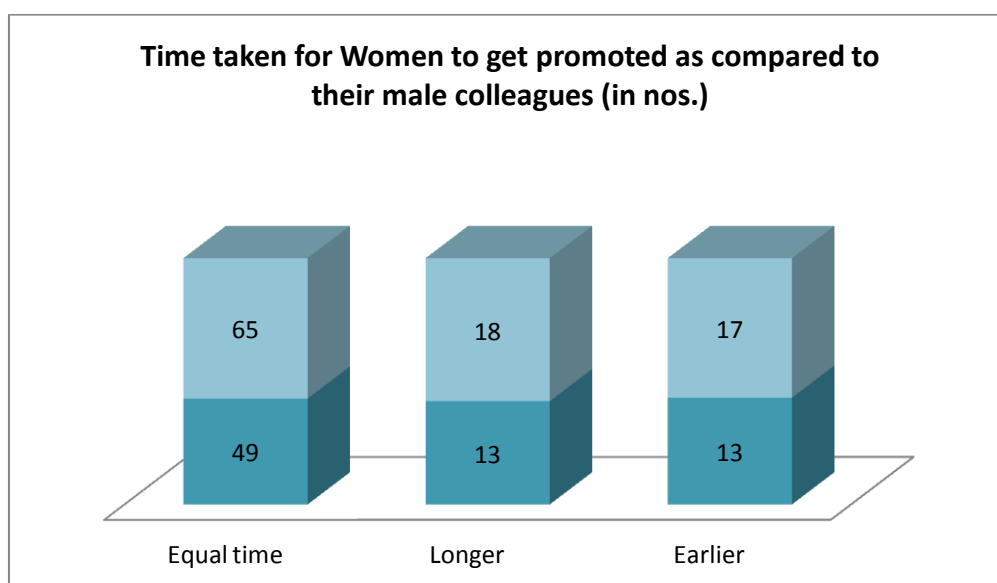| Sl. No. | Time taken | No. of respondent | Percentage (%) |
|---------|-----------|-------------------|----------------|
| 01 | Equal time | 49 | 65 |
| 02 | Longer | 13 | 18 |
| 03 | Earlier | 13 | 17 |
| 04 | Total | 75 | 100.00 |

**Source: Primary data**



Table 1.1 provides the above information 65% of female employees were promoted at the same time irrespective of their gender, 17% women were promoted earlier than their male colleagues and 18% took longer than their male peers. The above data reflects that gender bias related to promotions do not prevail much in the working atmosphere.

*Table 1.2:*
*Basis for Women getting promotion on merit (in nos.)*

| Sl. No. | Promotion on merit | No. of respondent | Percentage (%) |
|---------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 01 | Yes | 17 | 23 |
| 02 | No | 46 | 61 |
| 03 | Can't say | 12 | 16 |
| 04 | Total | 75 | 100.00 |

**Source: Primary data**
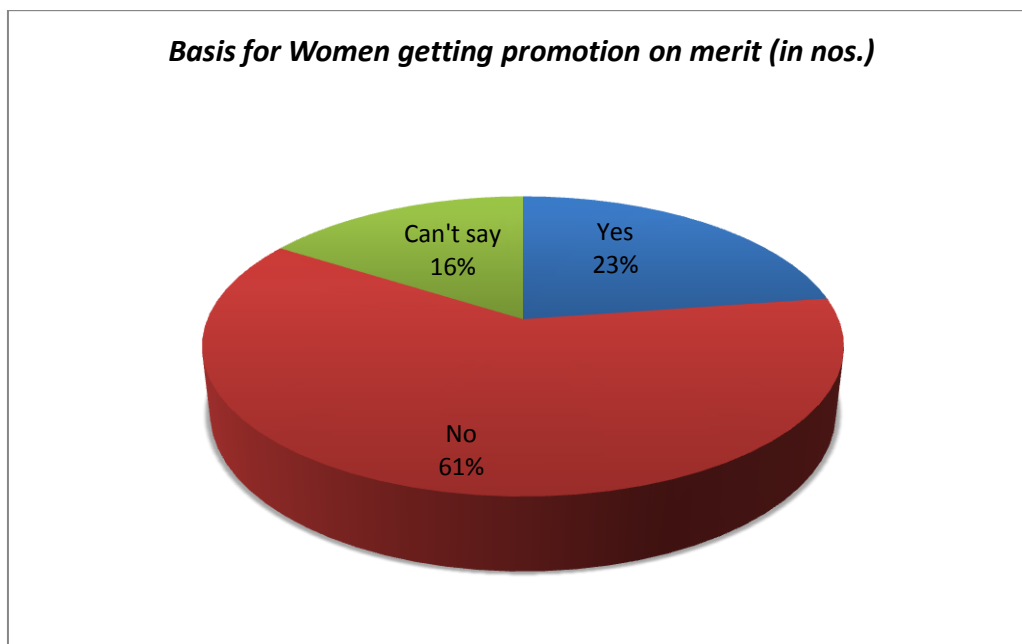
According to the above information 61% felt that their promotion was based on merit and not on the basis of favoritism or any other indecent proposal, 16% were not sure about their answers and 23% agreed that favoritism prevails in workplaces.

*Table 1.3:*
*Time spent on women (in nos.)*

| Sl. No. | Time spent | No. of respondent | Percentage (%) |
|---------|-----------|-------------------|----------------|
| 01 | Yes | 34 | 46 |
| 02 | No | 28 | 37 |
| 03 | Can't say | 13 | 17 |
| 04 | Total | 75 | 100.00 |

**Source: Primary data**
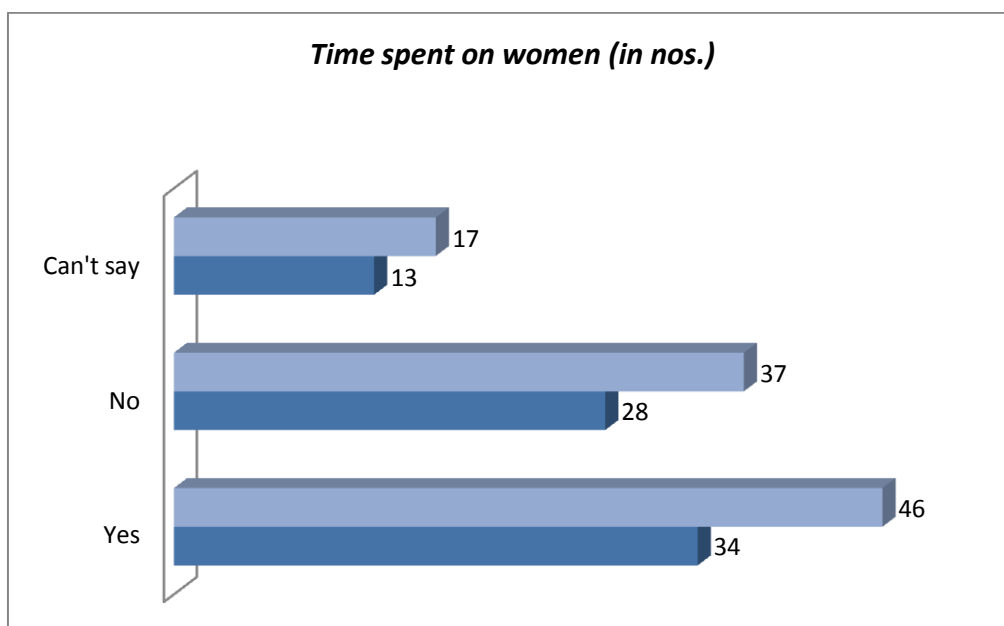


According to the above information 46% women agreed they were working as much as male colleagues, 17% women were not sure about their answers and 37% women agreed they were not working as much as their male colleagues because sometimes post or position also matter in work process. Accordingly duration of work hour factor also differs for men and women.

*Table 1.4:*
*How is the attitude of your Principal towards you?*

| Sl. No. | Attitude | No. of respondent | Percentage (%) |
|---------|----------|-------------------|----------------|
| 01 | Co-operative | 31 | 42 |
| 02 | Neutral | 40 | 53 |
| 03 | Abusive | 4 | 5 |
| 04 | Total | 75 | 100.00 |

**Source: Primary data.**



### How is the attitude of your Principal towards you?
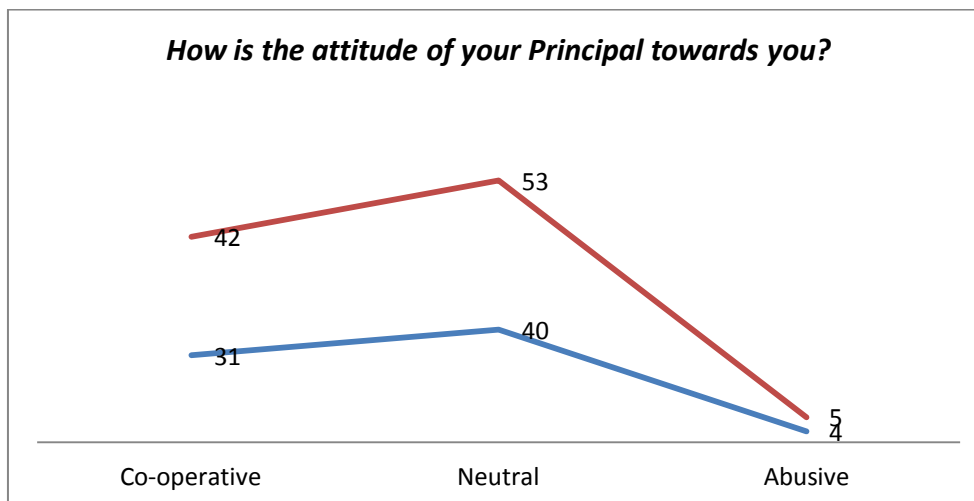
According to the above information 53% female agreed that their Principal attitude towards them were neutral, 42% women said that their Principal was co-operative with them and 5% women said their Principal attitude towards them were abusive.

*Table 1.5:*
*Perception of prevalence of sexual harassment or underestimation on the basis of gender (in nos.)*

| Sl. No. | Sexual harassment | No. of respondent | Percentage (%) |
|---------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 01 | Yes | 40 | 47 |
| 02 | No | 35 | 53 |
| 03 | Total | 75 | 100.00 |

**Source: Primary data**
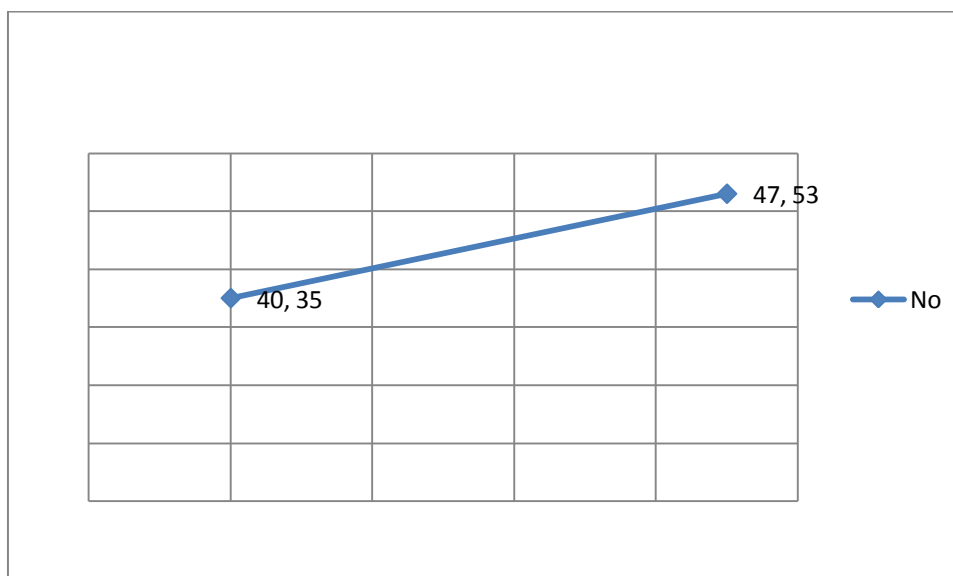


According to the above information 53% of females agreed that sometimes they felt hesitant to work with male colleagues and 47% said that they were not comfortable with male colleagues. The reason for such high percentage of women not feeling comfortable working with their male colleagues could be their lack of

self-confidence, or the inherent distrust for men in our society, reinforced down the years by negative experiences and general awareness.

*Table 1.6:*
*Do you think people draw conclusions about your character, reputation and attitude the way they like?*

| Sl. No. | Reputation | No. of respondent | Percentage (%) |
|---------|-----------|-------------------|----------------|
| 01 | Yes | 50 | 67 |
| 02 | No | 10 | 13 |
| 03 | Can't say | 15 | 20 |
| **04** | **Total** | **75** | **100.00** |

**Source: Primary data**



**Do you think people draw conclusions about your character, reputation and attitude the way they like?**
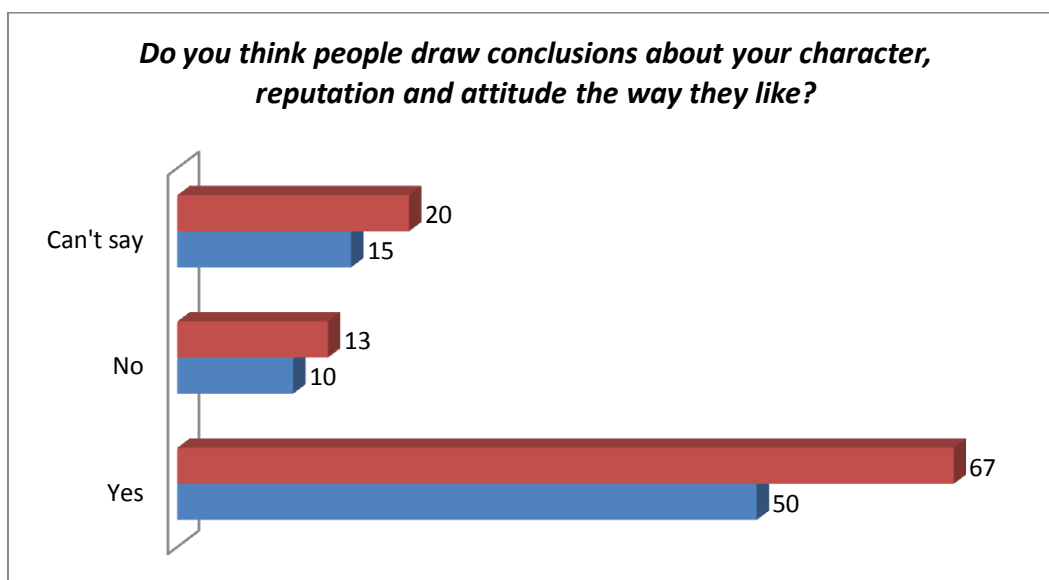
According to the above information 67% women agreed people draw conclusions about character, reputation and attitude the way they like, 13% women said they were not bother not have a time to think about others and 20% said don't have any idea what people said about them.

## II. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Conclusions related to the challenges and problems faced by working women drawn from the analysis of responses:

➤ Professional women feel isolated and burdened by the simultaneous demands of their new aspirations on one side and the traditional way of life on the other.

➤ Women are discriminated against in all walks of life.

➤ Women are generally unable to give proper and quality time to households, kids and family.

➤ Females are also highly judgmental about other female colleagues and try to put one at any given opportunity.

➤ Women face problems leaving kids at home and going to office early in the morning.

➤ Child rearing problems are always faced by working women.

➤ People make particular perception or draw conclusion about characters of working women. The social system cannot accept the new roles of women who end up feeling misunderstood and distressed.

**Conclusion:**

In a patriarchal society like India a particular boundary exists only for women, and if they try to cross that boundary then people start maligning them. The general perception is that if some women are doing things differently, beyond people's limited imagination, and out of sync with traditional thinking, like going out for jobs, wearing different type of fashionable clothes, talking freely with male members etc., immediately they are branded as loose women. India probably has still a long way to go to make our workplaces free from any prejudices, abuses and harassments. Even then we can still try at solving some of the related issues and problems with some possible solutions that have been mentioned above so that women become stronger and are able to handle any adverse situations.

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