

New Perspectives on Commerce & Management

Volume-2

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Principal
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Problems of Women Employees Working In Industrial Area of Thane District

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Abstract

Thane district is one of the most industrialised districts in Maharashtra. A key feature of this district is its primary dependence on the non-agricultural sector for employment. Thane district also ranks high in terms of female literacy as it was 79.77% in 2011 which was higher than the state literacy for females which was 75.87 percent during the same period.

As per the district census handbook of Thane district 21.74 percent females contributed to workforce participation, while the male workforce participation was 57.34 percent. It can be seen that due to the setup of industrial estates in Thane district, a large number of women employment can be seen in this district. This paper aims to study the positions held by the women employees in the industrial area of Thane district and to understand the problems faced by them.

Key words: Industrialisation, Thane District, Women employment.

I. Introduction

“Empowering women is key to building a future we want”- Amartya Sen

In the past few decades participation of women in every field has improved. But this growth when compared to male participation is still far behind. As per the International Labour Organization (ILO), percentage share of women employment in Industries in India was merely 17.35 percent in 2019.1 as per the World Development Indicators: Employment by sector participation of women in employment in India in agriculture, industry and services during the year 2019 was 54.7 percent, 17.3 percent and 28 percent respectively.

Thane is the third largest populated as well as industrialized district in Maharashtra. Large numbers of small, medium and large enterprises are operating in Thane. Rapid industrialisation in this region can be traced down before the formation of Maharashtra State due to its locational advantage as it is very near to sea which facilitated trade since ancient times. In the modern period, as Thane district is part of Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), it benefited due to the availability of industrial infrastructure in the district.

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II. Objectives of the Study

- To understand the industrial profile of Thane district.
 - To study the problems faced by women employees in particular in the industrial area of Thane district.
 - To study the government initiatives for women employment.
- iii. There are no problems faced by the women working in Industrial areas of Thane District.
- iv. There are many problems faced by the women working in Industrial areas of Thane District.

III. Research Methodology

Primary Data: A Questionnaire was prepared for primary research and the data was collected from a sample of 309 women employees for the study from Thane District.

Secondary Data: The secondary data was collected from the online resources available which include books, journals, government reports and newspapers.

Sampling Technique: Non-probability convenient technique was used to collect the data by using a structured questionnaire with likert scale. The nature of study is descriptive and inferential.

IV. Review of Literature

(Sultanpur, 2017) in her research paper titled 'Challenges of Women Entrepreneurs' studied the problems faced by women entrepreneurs in Gulbarga district of Karnataka. The paper was a primary study on 315 women entrepreneurs in the district of different age groups. The women entrepreneur in the district faced various challenges like family pressure, gender discrimination, lack of self-confidence, etc. Most of the women found difficulty in obtaining finance, followed by cut-throat competition and gender discrimination.

(Sugraj and Salve, 2014) highlighted the problems faced by women entrepreneurs in their development in the Western Maharashtra. The paper focused on the various problems like lack of personal and professional skills and moreover the orthodox family background that restricts their participation in employment generation.

Thane District: Thane district is the most populated district in India as per census 2011. But in 2014, Thane District was split into Thane and Palghar District. Thane is the heart of industrial hub in Maharashtra due to the setup of Maharashtra Industrial

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Development Corporation (MIDC) in August 1962 and also due to the abundance of availability of skilled and semi-skilled manpower due to the setup of various technical institutions in and near the vicinity of the district. The major industries that are operating include chemical industries, engineering units, textile industries, food processing units and services units. Except in engineering units all other industries provide ample opportunities for women to participate in employment in this region.

Table 1: Industrial profile of Thane District

Sr. No	Name of Industrial Area	Land Acquired (in hectare)	Land Developed (in hectare)	No. of units in Production
1.	Thane	252.36	252.36	
2.	Trans Thane Corridor	2333.27	2333.27	633
3.	Dombivli	357.27	357.27	2812
4.	Meera Road MIDC	7.82	7.82	1514
5.	Ambernath (Including Addl. Ambernath phase I and II)	1242.60	1236.18	37
6.	Kalyan - Bhiwand including Addl. Kalyan Bhiwandi	52.43	52.43	967
7.	Badlapur	101.10	99.80	20
8.	Murbad including Additional Murbad	269.56	265.57	274
	Total	4616.41	4604.70	432
				6689

Source: Compiled by researcher from Brief Industrial Profile of Thane District issued by GOI Ministry of MSME Mumbai 2016.

Table No. 1 briefly states the industrial profile of Thane District. It can be seen that the industrial area of Thane district is spread over 4616.41 hectares of land and the largest share of land is occupied by Trans Thane Corridor which starts from Thane and ends at Belapur and includes industrial estates of Rabale, Airoli, Khopar khairne, Kalwa, etc. Ambernath Industrial area occupies 2nd spot and large numbers of chemical and engineering units are set-up in this region. In terms of number of industries, although Dombivli has less area occupancy but many textile and chemical industries are set up which provides large numbers of employment especially to women employees. Bhiwandi industrial area is another industrial area in Thane district where a large number of women employees are found due to the transition in the industrial profile of this taluka and the setting-up of a large number of warehouses by many companies.

V. Women Employment in Thane District

Women employment in India has always been a topic of debate since Globalization. Although in the past few decades their number has increased but the

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as well as compared to male employment is negligible. Moreover the participation of women in the manufacturing sector has always been very low due to the inherent nature of work. Thane district is also no exception when it comes to women employment. A primary survey was conducted to study the problem faced by women employees working in the industrial estates of Thane district.

Table 2: Educational qualification of women employees

Sr. No.	Qualification	No. of Respondents	Percent
1	Below 12 th standard	71	23.0
2	Undergraduate	139	45.0
3	Graduate	74	23.9
4	Post graduate/ MBA	25	8.1
Total		309	100

Source: Compiled from Primary Survey

It can be seen from the above table that most of the female employees are under graduate or have completed only secondary education. Whereas merely 8 percent women employees are either graduate or post graduate or possess higher technical or business degrees.

Table 3: Nature of employment

Sr. No.	Nature of Job	No. of Respondents	Percent
1	Lower level Job	162	52.4
2	Middle Level job (Managerial)	115	37.2
3	Higher level job (Entrepreneur)	32	10.4
Total		309	100

Source: Compiled from Primary Survey

Table no. 3 Clearly shows that most of the women are engaged in lower level jobs due to lack of education and also due to the nature of work as Thane districts have major industries operating which requires large amounts of physical labour and men who work in the companies do not prefer to work under women supervisors. Still in chemical, food processing, services units and textile units' women are found working as supervisor or even at management level post. Very few women were found working at higher level, but few women entrepreneurs have ventured in food processing units and some were found in research institutes operating in Thane district.

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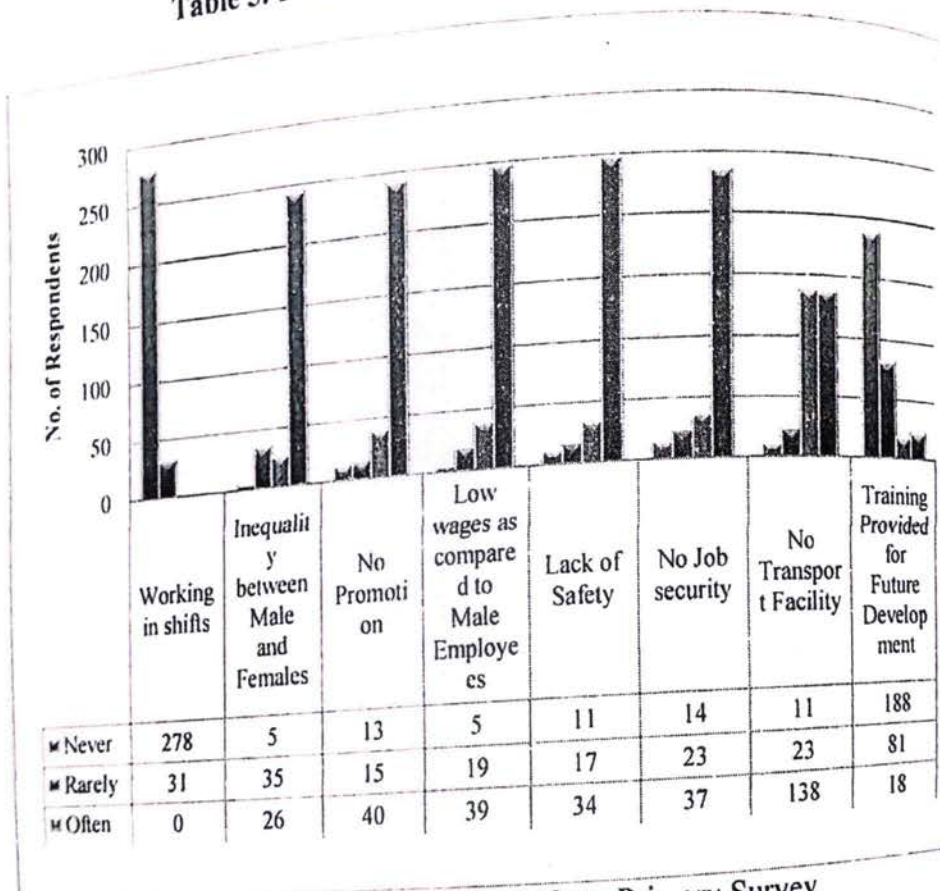
Table 4: Distance from Home to Workplace

How far is your workplace from your home?	Frequency	Percent
< 1 km	28	9.1
1-4 km	178	57.6
4-6 km	75	24.3
> 6 km	28	9.1
Total	309	100.0

Source: Compiled from Primary Survey

It was observed that most of the women employees (57.6 percent) resided within the 1-4 km from their work place and in most of the industrial area road connectivity were also very good. Share auto was easily available to them to reach the industrial area to even those women who resided a little far away. All the industrial areas are having good road and rail connectivity making it convenient for women employees to commute.

Table 5: Problems faced by women employees:



Source: Compiled by researcher from Primary Survey

Table no. 5 traces the few problems that women employees face during their employment. i) It can be seen in most of the cases women employees do not work

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... who work stated it's mostly till 10.00pm but there is no night shift for ... respondents stated that they always observed inequality in terms of ... compared to their opposite sex. iii) Most of the respondents were very ... provided with promotion which they were due, as these ... dominated industries. Moreover, women who said they got their promotion ... to their male counterparts but they opined that it was okay due to the ... work and less physical labour was involved in it especially employees ... lower level. v) Working environment in the Industrial area is safe during ... extreme interior location it has certain challenges for safety to women if ... working overtime or in different shifts. Within the organisation the responses ... were more positive. vi) Women employees working in the industrial units ... hired on temporary or on contractual basis and some are hired only when ... seasonal demand as a result most of them lack job security vii) As stated the ... of Thane is scattered up to 4616.41 hectares transport facility is not ... available to the remote locations. Otherwise due to locational advantage the ... connectivity is good throughout the district. viii) When a question was asked ... the training facility provided to women employees most of the employees' ... responses were negative as they were required to do monotonous jobs only.

Hypothesis Testing

H₀: There are no problems faced by the women working in the industrial area of Thane district.

H₁: There are so many problems which are faced by the women working in the industrial area of Thane district.

A mean score variable or Work Problem index was generated to find a continuous variable using the set of the eight variables with reference to Problems faced by the women. Therefore, for testing the hypothesis, we have used "One sample t-test" as we have a single set of values and because we are not comparing it over two distinct elements such as male or female. The results from the t-test are as follows

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Women Problem Index	309	.7816	.21060	.01198

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 0		Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df			Lower	Upper
Women Problem Index	65.233	308	.000	.78155	.7580	.8051

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The result above showed that the mean of the single variable generated was 65.233 with a standard deviation of 0.210. The calculated value of t is 1.968 at 308 degree of freedom and 95% confidence interval. The tabulated value of t is 1.968 at 308 degree of freedom and 95% confidence interval. The calculated significant value as calculated is 0.000 (< 0.05) and also t calculated $> t$ tabulated. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis was accepted. It was concluded that there are many problems which are faced by the women working in the industrial area of Thane district.

Suggestions:

- Women employees in Industrial area generally face large amount of gender discrimination which cannot be modified where physical labour is involved but manufacturing units where automation has taken place women employees should be given equal opportunity and training.
- Women employees working at lower level jobs face lack of motivation and confidence, they have poor self-image, job security is a distant dream, physical and health constraints are the barriers as a result they never aim for growth and development. Women supervisors or male supervisors must take active participation in understanding their problem and at a small level can undertake activities to improve their self-esteem.
- Due to lower wages, finance is always a major issue for women employees which causes stress among them if possible at organisational level a separate fund can be created to provide them assistance during emergencies.
- Thane district is an advanced district with availability of good infrastructure yet, to travel to remote areas in the industrial area transportation facility must be provided by the company or a specific union can be formed to take care of safety of women who are travelling for work during odd hours.
- Government can set up a fixed gender ratio norm in all kinds of industries which will provide certain kinds of job security to women employees. These gender ratios may differ from industry to industry but the government should emphasise on strictly following this norm which will increase women participation in manufacturing units.

VI. Government Initiatives for Development of Women Employees

National as well as State Government has taken various initiatives for development of Women Employees. Some of them are:

1. **National Policy for Women Empowerment 2016:** The Government has revised the National Women's Empowerment Policy (NPEW) 2001 and has made many modifications in it for the development of women entrepreneurs in India.
2. **Udhayam Shakti Portal for Women Entrepreneurs:** Government on 08th march, 2018 launched this scheme to nurture women entrepreneurs by

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providing them with a low cost business model to make them self-reliant and self-sufficient

4. **Mahila Yojana Scheme for Women:** This scheme was launched in 2015, which provides financial support to women entrepreneurs to obtain loans ranging from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 10,00,000 for setting up for their own enterprises

5. **Mahila Udyam Nidhi Yojana:** this scheme is launched by SIDBI for providing loans upto rupees 10 lakhs at concessional rates to women entrepreneurs of MSME. The amount of loan has to be repaid within 10 years.

6. **TREAD Scheme for Women:** Trade Related Entrepreneurship Development Assistance Scheme (TREAD) was launched with the aim of promoting women entrepreneurs with financial assistance in which 30% of the loan will be provided by the government and remaining 70% will be provided by the bank.

7. **STEP: Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP)** Scheme was launched to provide life and technical skills to women so as to make them competent and become self-employed. Under STEP training was provided in the field of agriculture, food processing, horticulture, tailoring, embroidery, computer and it enabled skills, etc.

8. **Specific Schemes launched by Government of Maharashtra:** a) Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal (MAVIM) – Govt. of Maharashtra in 1975 set up MAVIM to bridge the gender gap that has been created over the years by investing in capacity building for women to make them economically and socially empowered. b) Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for the Children of Working Mothers – Under these scheme 600 creches has been set up by Govt. of Maharashtra for working women in the district of Thane, Nashik, Nandurbar, Amravati, Gadchiroli and Chandrapur. c) Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahayog Yojna (IGSMY) – The main objective of this scheme was to compensate working women who lost wages during pregnancy or lactating period.

8. Laws protecting women at Workplace:

- a. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013
- b. The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961
- c. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
- d. Minimum Wages Act, 1948

VII. Conclusion

Women since ancient times have been among the oppressed section of our country. Problems faced by them are grave due to inherent male dominated society

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where even today they are deprived of higher education, they are not allowed to participate in decision making, even at some places they are deprived of their basic rights. But this scenario is changing in recent era due to awareness among the masses and also due to transition in the society. Governments at national and state level have initiated many schemes and policies to uplift the status of women both economically and socially. In spite of various initiatives by government, female employment in industries has always seen a stagnant growth due to lack of opportunities provided in them in manufacturing sector. Government can take initiative in setting-up of specific 'Women Industrial Parks' which may include - textiles industries, food processing units, gems and jewellery units, research and development units and IT enabled units where women employees can work at par with their male counterparts and Thane Industrial area can provide the infrastructure for such requirements.

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