



## JOB SATISFACTION AMONG WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN INFORMAL SECTOR – A CASE STUDY ON SALES GIRLS, CLERKS AND NURSES IN VISAKHAPATNAM CITY

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### ABSTRACT

*Job satisfaction is especially an important attitude for an organization. Satisfaction is a function of the discrepancy between what individual want from their jobs and what they perceive and obtain, taking into account equity or fairness. In this paper, an attempt has been made to study job satisfaction among women in informal sector. It also focused its attention on identifying the influence of some of those factors on satisfaction by the application of chi-square technique. The variables taken for study are job duties, nature of job, working conditions, work environment, wages and fringe benefits. The chi-square values have been calculated for the aggregated number of sample respondents (180) and also the category wise respondents (60) each. The results showed that significant proportion of the respondents want to discontinue their present jobs, if they get better opportunities. All the respondents opined that the present job is providing means of livelihood to them.*

**KEYWORDS:** Job Satisfaction, Informal Sector, Wage-Paying Jobs, Wage Labour

### PRELUDE

The informal sector first surfaced as an area of study in the late 1960's. As urban population burgeoned due to forces influencing overall national birth and death rates and to rural-urban migration, individuals unable to find regular wage-paying jobs in the incipient modern industries began to generate their own income earning activities. These activities included retail vending in markets, transport by man, animal and vehicle (such as the betjak operators of Jakarta, Indonesia) <sup>1</sup>, manufacturing of shoes, clothing and countless such other professions. The list of activities undertaken by urban dwellers was virtually endless. They ranged from legal to illegal. The illegal activities could be ascribed to the operations of the vendors who except for lack of a requisite license operated in the same manner as vendor with licenses<sup>2</sup>. In any case, informal sector activities are those that allowed easy entry and exit of vendors in the market.

Within the informal sector three major types of activities are identified – (a) home-based activities which are usually extensions of domestic work such as food processing, or those that involve traditional skills like embroidery, tailoring, toy-making, etc. (b) home-based production activities which required acquired skills, (c) retail trading and services which include flower and vegetable selling, bartering of old garments for utensils, laundering, and so on <sup>3</sup>. In addition, a fourth type of activity is identified, namely, contract or wage labour in small enterprises, construction work etc. It is therefore, important to study all these types of activities to understand the position and status of women labour in the informal sector.

Informal sector can be further classified into two sub sectors:<sup>4</sup> 1) the irregular sector and (2) the informal sector proper, while the former one consists of a variety of low status fringe activities, such as gardening, car washing

and leaf raking etc. the latter sector includes small scale economic and business activities, managed either by family members or a few employees. In the case of employees of 'informal sector proper' there exists some job security and working conditions to employees than those in the irregular sector.<sup>1</sup>

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kiran Wadhers, (1976)<sup>5</sup> stated that whatever the circumstances in which they work, most respondents are satisfied with their present job. This is surprising because a majority of them are working under conditions which leave a great deal to be desired possibly, the mere fact that they are going out of their homes to work itself gives them tremendous satisfaction.

Rekha Sharan (1980)<sup>6</sup> made an attempt to study the working conditions and job satisfaction among women working in the organized as well as unorganized industrial units of Kanpur city. The study revealed that the women in the latter sector have received inadequate wage and other benefits. Very few had job security and still fewer perceived any future job prospects in their places of work.

Karuna Ahmed (1981)<sup>7</sup> carried out a study on hospital administration and the role of doctors and nurses. It compared the role perception of doctors and nurses in the hospitals, the role that they are supposed to perform, the actual roles performed and the job satisfaction derived by them in discharge of their duties.

Organ (1988)<sup>8</sup> suggests that the failure to find a strong relationship between job satisfaction and performance is due to the narrow means often used to define job performance. Organ argued that when performance is defined to include important behaviors not generally reflected in performance appraisals, such as organizational citizenship behaviors, its relationship with job satisfaction improves.

Vidya Rani, (1990)<sup>9</sup> examined that working women felt that they have limited promotional opportunities and their jobs are not suitable to their educational qualifications and they do not get scope to use their ideas, imagination and creative faculties in their jobs. This leads to dissatisfaction.

Lise M. Saari and Timothy A. Judge (2004)<sup>10</sup> identifies three major gaps between HR practice and the scientific research in the area of employee attitudes in general and the most focal employee attitude in particular—job satisfaction: (1) the causes of employee attitudes, (2) the results of positive or negative job satisfaction, and (3) how to measure and influence employee attitudes. Suggestions for practitioners are provided on how to close the gaps in knowledge and for evaluating implemented practices.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study is carried out with the following specific objectives

1. To probe into the employment and emoluments of women employees in the informal sector proper in Visakhapatnam city.
2. To focus on the work environment of women employees of this sector.
3. To enquire into the job satisfaction of the women employees.

## METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLING

The study entailed a good deal of preparation and planning in order to secure the necessary update data and information. Considerable time has been invested to identify the respondents and to establish personal contact with them. The fieldwork for the study was staggered over two months (April – May, 2015). The inquiry process involved the following three broad phases.

### 1. Collection of primary data:-

The primary data for the study is collected by using a questionnaire for employees. The aspects on which the data are sought to be collected from the sample respondents include employment, emoluments, work environment, job satisfaction and fringe benefits etc.

### 2. Collection of Secondary data:-

The principal sources of information of the present study are various published books, journals, other bulletins internet etc. The libraries of Andhra University (Dr.V.S.Krishna Library), Center for Population Studies, Center for Women Studies, School of Economics are immensely used for the collection of secondary data.

### 3. Selection of Sample:-

The study has taken into consideration women employees in the broad lines of commercial and service activity, namely, shops, business units and private nursing homes. The women working in these establishments are designated as sales girls, clerks in the first two lines of activity and nurses in the last category. The sample for the study is selected on random basis from these three types of women employees. A total sample of 180 women respondents is comprised of 60 sales girls, 60 clerks and 60 nurses. The units selected are engaged in business and commercial activity such as fancy goods, cloth, readymade garments, groceries, stationery, pharmaceutical shops, photo studios, electronic shops, departmental stores, automobile shops etc.

**Statistical Tools Used:-**

The primary data have been interpreted with the help of simple statistical tools such as percentages, weighted means and chi-square test of significance. The perceptions of the respondents on certain attributes like job satisfaction, reasons for job dissatisfaction, attitude of respondents towards present job, opinion on working conditions work environment etc, have been ranked in the order of importance. Weights (w) have been assigned in descending order to each of the variable (x) and the

sum of the weighted scores (wx) is then, divided by the sum of the weights (w) to arrive at weighted averages.

The association of some of the attributes (as duties, work environment, nature of job, hours of work, wages and fringe benefits) to job satisfaction of the sales girls, clerks and nurses has been tested with chi-square technique. Where the frequency of attribute exceeded five the formula is:

$$X^2 = \frac{N(ad - bc)^2}{(a + c)(b + d)(a + b)(c + d)}$$

Where the frequency of attributes is less than five the formula used is:

$$X^2 = \frac{N [(a+1/2)(d+1/2) - (c-1/2)(b-1/2)]^2}{(a + c)(b + d)(a + b)(c + d)}$$

Where the variables are more than three the formula used is:

$$A_1 B_1 = (A_1) - (B_1)^2 / N, \quad A_1 B_2 = (A_1) (B_2)^2 / N, \quad A_2 B_1 = (A_2) (B_1)^2 / N,$$

$$A_2 B_2 = (A_2) - (B_2) / N, \quad A_3 B_1 = (A_3) (B_1) / N, \quad A_3 B_2 = (A_3) - (B_2) / N,$$

$$X^2 = (O-E)^2 / N, \quad O=A_1 B_1, \quad E=(A_1)-(B_1)^2 / N$$

The co-efficient values are compared with Fisher's chi-square significant table values at 5% significant level.

**Job Satisfaction:-**

Job satisfaction is a set of favourable or unfavorable feelings with which employees view their work<sup>11</sup>. It expresses the amount of agreement between

one's expectations of the job and the rewards that the job provides. Job satisfaction is part of life satisfaction<sup>12</sup>. The assumption that high satisfaction leads to high employee performance is not always correct. Job satisfaction refers to a collection of attitudes, which workers have about their jobs.

**ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**Table No.1 Respondent's Interest to Continue the Present Job**

Interest of Respondents	Sales Girls	Clerks	Nurses	Total
YES	10 (16.67)	9 (15.00)	11 (18.33)	30 (16.67)
NO	50 (83.33)	51 (85.33)	49 (81.67)	150 (83.33)
TOTAL	60 (100.00)	60 (100.00)	60 (100.00)	180 (100.00)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to total

The data relating to respondent's interest to continue in the present job are presented in the table 1. It is significant to note that more than four - fifths of the respondents (83.33%) want to discontinue their present jobs. Sales girls (83%), clerks (85%), and nurses (82%) are not interested to continue the job. The above data reveals

that majority of the respondents want to give up the present job more so in the case of clerks, if they get government jobs or more prospective jobs than the present one. It is true that job dissatisfaction leads to poor performance, low productivity, high absenteeism, turnover and increased unionization<sup>13</sup>.



**Table No.2 Feelings of the Respondents on their Job Prospects**

Opinion on Job Prospects	Sales Girls	Clerks	Nurses	Total
YES	8 (13.33)	12 (20.00)	16 (26.67)	36 (20.00)
NO	52 (86.67)	48 (80.00)	44 (73.33)	144 (80.00)
TOTAL	60 (100.00)	60 (100.00)	60 (100.00)	180 (100.00)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to total

**Table No.3 The Extent of Suitability of the Respondents' Educational Qualifications to the Present Job**

Suitability of Qualifications*	Sales Girls	Clerks	Nurses	Total
YES	49 (81.67)	29 (46.67)	38 (63.33)	116 (64.00)
NO	11 (18.33)	32 (53.37)	22 (36.67)	65 (36.00)
TOTAL	60 (100.00)	60 (100.00)	60 (100.00)	180 (100.00)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to total

\*The opinions on suitability of the educational qualifications for the present job as expressed by the respondents.

Data relating to prospects of job and the suitability of educational qualifications as perceived by the respondents are given in tables 2 and 3. As many as 144 out of the total 180 respondents felt that they find no prospects for them in the present jobs. It may be true that in the informal sector being the size of the operation of establishment is small the respondents may not have enough opportunities of promotions in existing units.

While 86.67% of sales girls, clerks 80% and nurses 73.33% perceive no future prospects of the present job. As far as educational qualifications are concerned 81.67% of sales girls, 46.67% of clerks and 63.33% of nurses opined that their educational qualifications are suitable to the present job. It is evident that more than half of the women working as clerks are not in possession of suitable educational qualifications.

**Table No.4 Respondents' Satisfaction on the Present Job**

Satisfaction of the respondents	Sales Girls	Clerks	Nurses	Total
YES	55 (91.66)	29 (48.33)	22 (36.67)	106 (58.88)
NO	5 (8.34)	31 (51.67)	38 (63.33)	74 (41.12)
TOTAL	60 (100.00)	60 (100.00)	60 (100.00)	180 (100.00)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to total.

Table 4 shows the respondent's satisfaction about the present job. Nearly 59% of them have expressed satisfaction about their present job. But the category - wise analysis reveals that excepting sales girls (91.66%), significant proportion of clerks and nurses expressed

dissatisfaction with the present job. The table reveals that only 48% of clerks and 37% of nurses are satisfied and rest are dissatisfied with present job. The reasons are obvious that the clerks and nurses have acquired higher qualifications, which would enable them to get better jobs either in public or private sector.

**Table No.5 Reasons Contributing for Job Dissatisfaction**

Reasons	Sales Girls			Clerks			Nurses		
	Total Score	Avg. Score	Rank	Total Score	Avg. Score	Rank	Total Score	Avg. Score	Rank
Salary/wage is very low	24	1.6	1	151	10.07	1	182	12.13	1
Fringe benefits are inadequate	20	1.3	2	118	7.87	2	152	10.20	2
Away from place of stay	10	0.7	3	40	2.67	5	87	5.80	3
Low status job	9	0.6	4	65	4.33	4	73	4.86	4
Less freedom in work	8	0.5	5	66	4.40	3	50	3.33	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>			<b>440</b>			<b>545</b>		

*Note:* Five attributes are offered for ranking to the respondents to find out their perception about working women's status in the society. Total score is computed on the basis of weights assigned to the attributes in the descending order as follows: (1<sup>st</sup> rank 5 points, 2<sup>nd</sup> rank 4 points .....5<sup>th</sup> rank single point). Each total score is multiplied with corresponding rank and is divided by the sum of the weights to arrive at average score.

$$\text{i.e. } \frac{WX}{W}$$

The reasons for job dissatisfaction are enumerated in table 5. Low salary seems to be the major reason for dissatisfaction among all groups of the respondents followed by inadequate fringe benefits. While, the place of work is away from their residence is a third major reason that led to dissatisfaction for sales girls and

nurses, the same factor had a least effect on the satisfaction of clerks. These may be the reasons for their intention to quit. Research studies have reported that job satisfaction is a predictor of turnover and intent to quit has been found to be the most immediate precursor of turnover<sup>14</sup>.

**Table No.6 Respondents' Opinion on Job Security**

Respondents opinion	Sales Girls	Clerks	Nurses	Total
YES	58 (96.67)	53 (88.33)	52 (86.67)	163 (90.56)
NO	2 (3.33)	7 (11.67)	8 (13.33)	17 (9.44)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60 (100.00)</b>	<b>60 (100.00)</b>	<b>60 (100.00)</b>	<b>180 (100.00)</b>

*Note:* Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to total.

It is quite evident from the table 6 that job security has no relation with job satisfaction. As many as 163 respondents indicated that they have job security. It is

observed that generally the employers do not retrench the employees even in informal sector unless there are grave lapses on their part.

**Table No.7 Respondents' Opinion on their Present Job**

Reasons	Sales Girls			Clerks			Nurses		
	Total Score	Avg. Score	Rank	Total Score	Avg. Score	Rank	Total Score	Avg. Score	Rank
It could provide means of livelihood	204	22.66	1	158	15.80	1	216	21.60	1
It could help to improve skills	133	14.77	3	150	15.00	2	155	15.50	2
It could help to deal with people successfully	109	12.11	4	136	13.60	3	140	14.00	3
In might help in getting better job	142	15.77	2	113	11.30	4	89	8.90	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>588</b>			<b>557</b>			<b>600</b>		

*Note:* Four attributes are offered for ranking to the respondents to find out their perception about working women's status in the society. Total score is computed on the basis of weights assigned to the attributes in the descending order as follows: (1<sup>st</sup> rank 4 points, 2<sup>nd</sup> rank 3 points .....4<sup>th</sup> rank single point). Each total score is multiplied with corresponding rank and is divided by the sum of the weights to arrive at average score. i.e.

$$\frac{WX}{W}$$

With respect to the perception about the respondents' present job, which is presented in table 7, all the respondents ranked 1<sup>st</sup> rank in favour of their present job that it is providing means of livelihood. A considerable number of sales girls felt that the experience they gain from this job will enable them to get better job ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> rank followed by their present job helps to improve their skills, and they gain knowledge of dealing with people successfully. Clerks as well as nurses gave same ranks to other variables. Therefore, it is evident that most of the respondents have taken up these jobs as a means to earn their livelihood.

An attempt has been made here to focus its attention on identifying the influence of some of those factors on satisfaction by the application of chi-square technique. The variables taken for study are job duties, nature of job, working conditions, work environment, wages and fringe benefits. The chi-square values have been calculated for the aggregated number of sample respondents (180) and also for the category - wise respondents, to test the dependence between job satisfaction and different parameters at 5% significant level.

**Table No.8 Association between Duties and Job Satisfaction**

(X<sup>2</sup> Values)

Duties	Sales Girls	Clerks	Nurses	Total
Difficult Easy	6.97*	1.80	0.0029	10.83*
Physical strain No Physical strain	6.00*	1.45	0.29	16.75*
Mental strain No mental strain	2.97	2.39	0.43	26.43*
Clear Unclear	0.58	4.21*	1.39	16.89*

\* Significant at 5% acceptance level

The relationship between the job duties and satisfaction is presented in table 8. It is quite evident that there is a close relationship between the job satisfaction and job performance of the respondents. While the satisfaction of sales girls has a direct bearing on performance of duties (6.97), its association is not

significance in the case of clerks and nurses (1.80 and 0.0029 respectively). Though the mental strain appears to be an influencing factor on the job satisfaction of 180 respondents (26.43%), individually it has not been found to be associated with satisfaction.

**Table No.9 Association between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction**

(X<sup>2</sup> Values)

	Sales Girls	Clerks	Nurses	Total
Lighting Good Moderate	5.37*	1.61	0.12	4.74*
Ventilation Good Moderate	2.83	8.2*	6.8*	0.90
Drinking Water Good Moderate	3.20	1.02	1.82	5.04*
Toilets Good Moderate Bad	1.359	5.5317	0.301	27.51*

\* Significant at 5% acceptance level

The impact of work environment on the respondent's job satisfaction is measured in terms of certain facilities, such as lighting, ventilation, drinking water and toilets. Excepting ventilation (0.90) the remaining is observed to be exerting influence on job satisfaction of the respondents.

The chi-square values of lighting (4.74) drinking water (5.04) and toilets (27.51) are significant (table 9). However, it is quite surprising that these factors are influencing job satisfaction when the aggregate number of respondents are taken together and proved to be independent in the case of individual level.

**Table No.10 Association between Nature of Job and Job Satisfaction**(X<sup>2</sup> Values)

	Sales Girls	Clerks	Nurses	Total
Well challenging Not challenging	0.015	7.81*	0.39	0.95
Interesting Disinteresting	2.75	1.45	0.12	4.3
Stereo type Non-stereo type	2.26	0.85	1.23	8.06*

\* Significant at 5% acceptance level.

As per table 10 the respondent's job satisfaction is affected by the repetitive nature of job duties. The stereotype nature of job is one of the responsible factors

for changes in satisfaction of all the respondents (8.06). The clerks perceived that challenging job is one such factor that influences their satisfaction levels.

**Table No.11 Association between Hours of Work and Job Satisfaction**(X<sup>2</sup> Values)

Hours	Sales Girls	Clerks	Nurses	Total
Up to 8 hours 9 to 10 hours 10 and above	1.574	6.67	15.52*	5.253

\* Significant at 5% acceptance level.

Table 11 reveals the relationship between hours of work and the job satisfaction of the respondents. On the whole, the dependence of this attribute on job satisfaction is not significant among the 180 respondents.

However, the nurses felt low job satisfaction as they were asked to work long hours on shift system at the nursing homes (15.52).

**Table No.12 Association between Wages and Job Satisfaction**(X<sup>2</sup> Values)

	Sales Girls	Clerks	Nurses	Total
Fairly high Moderate Low	7.17*	2.06	0.207	24.378

\* Significant at 5% acceptance level.

The relation between wages and job satisfaction reveals interesting phenomenon. All the respondents are paid low wages and it is found to be a dependent variable with regard to job satisfaction level. In other words, low

wages has led to low job satisfaction. However, in the case of sales girls wages and job satisfaction relationship is found to be independent (table 12).

**Table No.13 Association between Fringe Benefits and Job Satisfaction**(X<sup>2</sup> Values)

	Sales Girls	Clerks	Nurses	Total
Adequate Average Inadequate	1.602	0.558	10.30*	22.63*

\* Significant at 5% acceptance level.

In respect of nurses, fringe benefits have become the dominant factor affecting the job satisfaction (10.30). The other two groups of respondents are not significantly responsive to fringe benefits. However, the combined effect of all the 180 respondents proved that there is a positive relation between these two variables (table 13).

**FINDINGS**

1. Significant proportion of respondents (83.33%) wants to discontinue their present jobs, if they get better opportunities.

2. Low salary to be the major reason for job dissatisfaction among all groups of respondents followed by inadequate fringe benefits.
3. Job security has no relation with job satisfaction because the employers generally do not retrench her unless there are grave lapses on their part.
4. All respondents opined that the present job is providing means of livelihood to them.
5. The study revealed close relationship between job satisfaction and performance of job duties.

6. In respect of work environment excepting ventilation, other facilities like lighting, drinking water and toilets are observed to be exerting influence on job satisfaction of the respondents.
7. It is evident that repetitive nature of jobs also affected the extent of job satisfaction.
8. The satisfaction of the respondents is found to be more with the challenging nature of the job.
9. Wages are also found to be one of the significant factors of job satisfaction.
10. Strangely, the study observed no significant relationship between job satisfaction and hours of work of the respondents.
11. Fringe benefits are also exerting influence on the satisfaction of the respondents.

### SUGGESTIONS

1. About 83% of the respondents want to discontinue their jobs. In order to retain the existing employees the employers should increase the wages and widen their opportunities, so that of the respondents may continue their present jobs.
2. Nurses felt low job satisfaction as they are asked to work long hours on shift system at the nursing homes. It is advisable that doctors should try to reduce the working hours of nurses.
3. Employers of clerks and nurses should provide more prospects to the present job to retain them, because clerks and nurses have acquired higher qualifications that would enable them to get better jobs either in public or private sector.
4. Employers should provide minimum welfare facilities and fringe benefits to the employees.
5. In order to motivate the employees the employer should provide good working environment.

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