



# Women Empowerment in the BPO sector in Bangalore

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**Abstract**— The research aims at throwing light on one of the major issues of the society- women empowerment. It will help us gain understanding about the position of women in the society. The professional women are taken into account to give us access to determining the effect of work on the personal lives of those women, especially the married ones. The Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) is a growing sector of the economy. It has increasing demand amongst young women. But a major constraint of women security comes into picture when we talk about jobs under this sector. Thus, our study tries to found out about safety issues as well as their work-life balance. Another important aspect of the study is the importance and ability of decision making of women. The gender equity and position of women are dependable on this. Also, the spousal violence faced by these married working women is analyzed. Thus, a random consensus of professional women of the BPO sector of various companies of Bangalore helped us come to few conclusions and determine the current position of women in a fast paced city like Bangalore.

**Keywords**— Empowerment, professional women, BPO sector, decision-making, spousal violence, work-life balance, gender inequality

## I. INTRODUCTION

Women empowerment refers to encouraging, and developing the skills for, self-sufficiency, with focus on eliminating the future dependency of women on others in a way of increased participation in counsels, groups, and businesses.

Women represent almost one-third part of the BPO sector and their contribution in this industry is major. Technology and certain regulatory changes have accentuated the demand of female employees in BPO sector. Major reasons behind joining this industry are easy entry and exit, fair remuneration, not much qualification required and lifestyle. Yet, they face serious issues like, night shifts, flexible working hours, transportation, socio-cultural factors and sexual harassment. Major reasons behind joining this industry are easy entry and exit, fair remuneration, not much qualification required and lifestyle. Yet, they face serious issues like, night shifts, flexible working hours, transportation, socio-cultural factors and sexual harassment

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

**Lather A. (2009)** brings out an attempt to study the status of women empowerment in various areas in the National Capital Region, Delhi. The article aims at measuring the extent to which women professionals in Delhi feel that they are empowered in education, health and well being, decision making and sexual harassment. The article claimed that globalization, industrialization and modernization eliminated practices like sati, slave trade and promoted girl education. The analysis drawn depended on the age and marital status of women. The situation of girl child is said to be improved in this article. Yet, women empowerment cannot be talked about when cases of violation against women are rampant everywhere. The possible solution suggested is the change in the mindset of the people.

**Pathak S. (2011)** concludes that there are various opportunities and challenges faced by professional women in India. It aims at providing an overview of what changes are required to manage the biggest challenge, stress, among women. The paper also highlights the coping strategies that can be selected to further continue journey to gender inclusion and the advancement of women in the organizations. Employees at BPO work 24 hours a day. Women are divided into parts- household and office. This puts pressure on them to manage two worlds. Another barrier would be the perspective of women considering men as leaders. Thus, the article suggested measures to eradicate gender bias. It even suggested women to be mentored on time management at home and office. Networking forums, cultural programs and career counseling were few other suggested strategies.

**The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) (2005)** brought out a research on the night shift of women of the BPO as well as other sectors. It also finds out opportunities for women as well as examines the provisions provided to them according to Factory Amendment Act. The question of whether nightshifts for women should be banned has been debated upon for over a hundred years. The Factories Act 1948, under section 66, banned working of women in night shifts. But the efforts of the Government in opening new opportunities for women in employment sector by allowing night shifts for women employees is a very bold step and worth applause. However, night shifts work causes



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negative effects on health and family life of workers. The study showed that the physiological, emotional and biological needs of a woman are based on a rhythmic pattern of sleeping and awakening. Change in working schedule affects the balance. All in all, provisions must be made for a comfortable work environment for women professionals.

**Reddy Krishna N and Ahmed Atiq (2010)** states that family–work conflict (FWC) and work–family conflict (WFC) are more likely to exert negative influences in the family domain, resulting in lower life satisfaction and greater internal conflict within the family. Variables such as the size of family, the age of children, the work hours and the level of social support impact the experience of WFC and FWC. This highlights the current concern within society and organizations about the impact of multiple roles on the health and well-being of professional women and its implications regarding work and family performance, and women's role in society. The findings of the study emphasized the need to formulate guidelines for the management of WFCs at organizational level as it is related to job satisfaction and performance of the employees.

**Swaminathan Hema, Lahoti Rahul and J. Y. Suchitra (2012)** brings out that a substantial gap exists in asset ownership between men and women. In this paper, they examine the impact of rural women's property ownership on their mobility and autonomy in decision making. The research was undertaken in order to measure the extent of gender disparities in asset ownership and wealth in the state, and to build on the empirical literature that discusses the importance of asset ownership for women. Married women were more likely to be homemakers than single women, reflecting perhaps that women do not or are not allowed to take up employment unless there is a situation of economic distress in the household. The findings of this paper thus bring to focus the need to intensify policy interventions aimed at increasing women's asset base and bridging the gender asset gap. The study findings illustrate the importance of employment in women's lives.

**Kumar Prahlad and Paul Tinker (2001)** observe that motion of empowerment is that it is inescapably bound up with the condition of disempowerment. The theme of article is status and role of women in society and also an inequality of men and women. The objective of the study dealt with the concept of empowerment of women in the first section and the second section they deal with a specific but the most important determinant of empowerment of women, that is decision making capacity or autonomy in decision making..

**Dr Shambhu Nath Tiwari (2005)** observes how women lag far behind the males in terms of economic, social and political attainments. The objective of study is efforts to remove discrimination against females and establish equally has become the part of the global movement. The major reason behind the discrimination between men and women on

the basis of sex creating various types of gender biases. The statistics reveal women are lagging behind men in four major indicators that is sex ratio, mean age of the marriage, literacy, and work participation underlining the fact that the gender bias still haunting the male dominated. This article concludes that top priority should be given in our development plans for improving female literacy and enabling them to stand on their own feet.

There are various obstacles in the empowerment of women professionals in the BPO sector. Thus, the various aspects causing the obstacles like decision making, work life balance, time constraints and domestic balance are the basis of the study.

The study is restricted to the professional women of the BPO sector. The company under study is BPO sector in Bangalore.

### III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study will clarify the position of women in the society and will reflect how peaceful their personal life is. Women are not given power to make decisions. Many women are not given freedom to make their decision on their own whether it is in personal life or professional life. To get higher position at work, women are asked to work for late hours and do night shifts which might cause some undesirable mishaps and also put a question on the security of women.

Women are facing many difficulties to maintain work life balance. This has a great impact on marital life as professional women are not able to devote quality family time. The outside picture of professional women might appear stable but the reality is that there are many cases where domestic violence happens due to men domination and improper work-life balance.

### IV. OBJECTIVES

- To find out problems faced by women in BPO sector.
- To study how decision-making is important for achieving empowerment.
- To find out the difficulties in work life balance of women.

### V. HYPOTHESIS

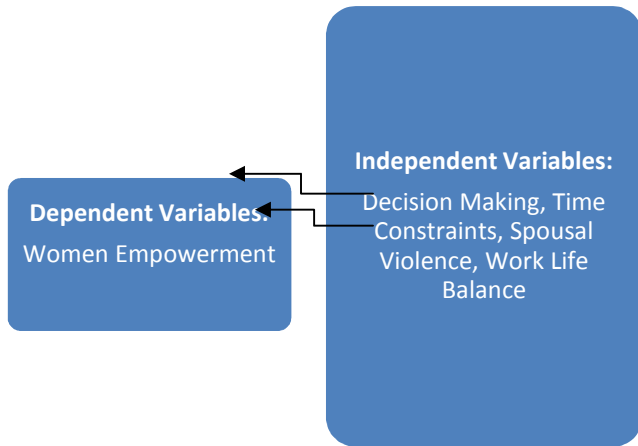
- $H_0:1$  Women face a lot of problems in BPO sector.
- $H_0:2$  Decision-making is important for achieving empowerment.
- $H_0:3$  There are many difficulties in balancing work life faced by women.

### VI. CONCEPTUAL PLAN

The use of dependent variables like women empowerment and independent variables like decision making and time management are involved.



**Data Analysis comparing marital status of women with work environment suitability using CHI-SQUARE TEST**



	Married	Unmarried	Total
Suitable	17	10	27
Unsuitable	8	15	23
<b>TOTAL</b>	25	25	50

Observed Value (O)	Expected Value (E)	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	(O-E) <sup>2</sup> /E
17	13.5	12.25	0.91
10	13.5	12.25	0.91
8	11.5	12.25	1.07
15	11.5	12.25	1.07
			<b>3.96</b>

**Test Statistic is:**

$$\text{Chi square} = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E} = 3.96$$

$$\text{d.f.} = (c - 1)(r - 1) = (2 - 1)(2 - 1) = 1$$

At 5% level of significance,

H<sub>0</sub>: Work environment is not suitable for women

H<sub>1</sub>: Work environment is suitable for women

Since, 3.96 > 3.841

Hence, H<sub>0</sub> is rejected.

**VII. SAMPLING PLAN**

Random sampling is used. The data has been collected from both primary and secondary sources:

- PRIMARY SOURCE: questionnaire methods and surveys
- SECONDARY SOURCE: information from journals, magazines and other websites.

**VIII. TOOLS FOR ANALYZING DATA**

-mean: To find out among all the types of facilities which is the most demanded facility.

-chi square: To find out is the work environment suitable for married as well as unmarried women.

**IX. FINDINGS**

TYPES OF FACILITIES REQUIRED	
	(%)
conveyance	100
insurance	76
job security	88
family security	50
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>78.5</b>

The table represents the types of facilities required by the professional women. Among all, conveyance is the most demanded facility i.e. 100%. Also, job security and insurance are highly demanded facility. The average mean of the types of facility required is 78.5%

**X. CONCLUSION**

The study has helped us understand the current position of women in the BPO sector. We see that more than 60% of the posts held are at the entry level, which result in lower pays to the women. The lower income leads to income dissatisfaction as the pays are not enough for their living. Also, the women feel there is gender inequality at work place. This leads to higher dissatisfaction. The decision making power ranks low for most women. This shows that there are many cases that are not given the power to make their own decisions. There is gender bias still prevalent in our society. Further, the study showed the various securities that are required by women. It is found that conveyance facilities and job security are the most demanded of all. Work timings have a great impact on the lives of women. It is found that late shifts and night shifts affect the personal lives of women adversely. Also, this becomes one of the few reasons leading to work life imbalance.

Thus, the study has drawn various conclusions about the present scenario of BPO companies. We see the various obstacles coming in way in the empowerment of women. Women are trying every possible way to manage their personal as well as professional lives efficiently. Yet, the various hindrances are stopping them to do so. Progress can only be shown when we remove all such issues like gender bias and income inequality. Motivation of women and giving them equal rights as men will not only improve the position of



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women but the society as a whole. Thus, for women to feel empowered, they must be given the right to make their own choices and decisions and the securities they require to feel safe.

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