



**OPINION OF THE WOMEN WORKERS IN MATCH INDUSTRY TOWARDS  
SPECIAL PROVISIONS IN FACTORIES ACT, 1948**

**Subasini.M,**

Assistant Professor of Commerce (Professional Accounting),  
V.V.Vanniaperumal College for Women,  
Virudhunagar, India.

**Corresponding Author: [subhashini@vvvcollege.org](mailto:subhashini@vvvcollege.org)**

**ABSTRACT**

Working women form a major part peace of society. They belong to the weaker section of the society. They need equal treatment and special protection under the law. Labour laws apply to that area of activity where workers are working under a contract of employment. As the workers are being subject to exploitation and discrimination and their human rights being violated so the need arose for enactment of the labour laws for their protection and security. Amongst labourers, the conditions of working women are particularly vulnerable. Hence, an attempt has been made to study the provisions available to women workers in Factories Act, 1948. The present study is confined to analyse the opinion of the women workers in match industry towards special provisions available for them in Factories Act, 1948.

**Key words:** Labourers, Labour Law, Factories Act

**INTRODUCTION**

Working women form a major part of society. They belong to the weaker law. To protect this vulnerable group, many legislative provisions have been provided in

section of the society. They need equal treatment and special protection under the

almost all labour statutes which address problems of women labourers in their employment situation.

Early measures for the protection of women workers were simple in character passed which not only regulated the hours of work but also contained provisions of health, safety and welfare of women workers and guarantees equality before law and equal treatment to women workers. Besides, measures adopted by the Government for the implementation of these ILO Conventions, various other provisions have been made in the labour legislations for the protection and welfare of women workers.

The labour welfare legislations are of two kinds. The first category contains those statutory enactments which are exclusively for women workers, e.g. the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 and the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976. The second category covers the labour statutes which provide measures for the workers at large but contain special provisions for the welfare of women workers. These legislations relate to regulation of employment in dangerous occupation/ employments, prohibition of night work, restriction on carriage of heavy loads, wages, health, gratuity, maternity relief,

and were designed only to regulate the hours of work and employment. Consequently, such laws were

equal pay for equal work, social security, provision of crèches and other welfare facilities and so on.

#### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Labour laws apply to that area of activity where workers are working under a contract of employment. As the workers are being subject to exploitation and discrimination and their human rights being violated so the need arose for enactment of the labour laws for their protection and security. Amongst labourers, the conditions of working women are particularly vulnerable. Hence, an attempt has been made to study the provisions available to women workers in Factories Act, 1948.

#### **SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The present study is confined to study the opinion of the women workers in match industry towards special provisions available for them in Factories Act, 1948. The study does not take into consideration other industries viz., printing industry, crackers industry and edible products industry and so on. This study focuses on the provisions available for women only. It

does not take into consideration all the provisions.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. special provisions available for them in Factories Act, 1948.
2. To give suggestions to the match industries on the basis of findings of the study

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methodology covers data collection, tools of data collection, population framework, sample design, sampling technique and data processing.

**Data Collection**

The study is based on both primary and secondary data

**Tools of Data Collection**

Primary data have been gathered from 240 women workers who are employed in match industries by using well structured and pre-tested questionnaire. The secondary data have been gathered from books, journals, magazines and websites.

**Population Framework**

The population framework is given in Table 1.

**Table 1: Number of Women workers in Match Factorie**

Name of the Match Factory	No. of Women Workers

Sundaravel Match industries	75
Rajasekaran Match Industries	67
Arasan Match Industries	58
Standard Match Industries	49
Thangavelu Match Industries	81
Safety Matches Manufacturers	79
Durga Colour Match Factory	74
Asia Match Company Pvt. Ltd.	57
Varnajalam Match Works	69
Rathinavel Match Industries	28
Total	637

**Sample Design**

In Sivakasi, ten match factories are registered under DIC. The total number of women workers employed in ten factories is 637. Rao’s sample size calculator has been used to determine the sample size. The population of 637 is fed in the Rao’s calculator. The sample size is calculated as 240 at 95 percent level of confidence.

**Sampling technique**

The sample of 240 respondents has been chosen randomly by adopting a random sampling technique.

**Data Processing**

Primary data has been coded and edited for analytical purposes. Likert’s Five Point Scaling Technique and percentage analysis have been used to analyse the opinion of the women workers in the match industry towards special provisions available for them in the Factories Act, 1948.

## **SPECIAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO WOMEN IN FACTORIES ACT, 1948**

The Factories Act is a welfare legislation enacted with an intention to regulate working conditions in the factories and to provide health, safety and welfare measures.

### **Latrine and Urinal Facilities**

The Factories Act, 1948 makes it obligatory for every factory to maintain an adequate number of latrines and urinals of the prescribed type separately for men and women workers. Such facilities are to be conveniently situated and accessible to workers at all times while they are in the factory. Every latrine is required to be under cover and so partitioned off as to secure privacy and have a proper door and fastenings. Sweepers are required to be employed to keep latrines, urinals and washing places clean.

### **Prohibition of Work in Hazardous Occupations**

The Factories Act, 1948 prohibits employment of women in dangerous occupations. Section 22(2) of the Factories Act, 1948 provides that no women shall be allowed to clean, lubricate or adjust any part of a prime mover or of any transmission machinery.

### **Washing and Bathing Facilities**

Separate facilities for washing and bathing are provided for women workers under the Factories Act. According to Section 42 (1)(b) of the Act, separate and adequately screened washing facilities shall be provided for the use of male and female workers. Such facilities shall be conveniently accessible and shall be kept clean.

### **Crèches**

A crèche is a nursery. It is a place where babies of working mothers are taken care of while the mothers are at work. Section 48 of the Factories Act, 1948 provides that in every factory wherein more than 30 women workers are ordinarily employed, there shall be provided and maintained a suitable room for the use of children under the age of six years of such women. Such rooms shall be maintained in a clean sanitary condition and shall be under the charge of women trained in the care of children and infants. Permission is given to the mothers of such children to feed them at the necessary intervals.

### **Hours of Work**

Under the Factories Act, 1948, the daily hours of work of adult workers have been fixed as nine hours. The Act permits men under certain circumstances to work for more than nine hours on any day. It does not

permit women to work beyond this limit. Also in case of women workers, there shall be no change of shifts except after a weekly holiday or any other holiday.

### Maximum Permissible Load

To safeguard women against the dangers arising out of lifting to heavy weight, the Factories Act authorises the appropriate governments to fix the maximum load that may be lifted by women.

- Adult females : 65 lbs.
- Adolescent females: 55 lbs.
- Female children : 30 lbs.

### Prohibition of Night work

The Factories Act, 1948 prohibits the employment of women during night hours.

According to Section 66(1)(b) of the Factories Act, 1948, no woman shall be required or allowed to work in any factory between the hours of 6 a.m. and 7 p.m.

### Opinion of the Women Workers towards Special Provisions in Factories Act, 1948

It is seen in Table 2 that the opinion of the women workers towards special provisions available for them in Factories Act 1948. 'F' test has been used to analyse the opinion of the women workers regarding seven special provisions.

$H_0$ : There is no significant difference among the opinion of the women workers in various match factories regarding special provisions available for them in Factories Act, 1948.

**Table 2 :Opinion of the Women Workers towards special Provisions in Factories Act, 1948**

Special Provisions	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	No Opinion	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	Total
Latrine and Urinal Facilities	57 (23.75)	38 (15.83)	40 (16.67)	44 (18.83)	61 (25.42)	240 (100)
Prohibition of work in Hazardous Occupations	75 (31.25)	67 (27.92)	58 (24.17)	14 (5.83)	26 (10.83)	240 (100)
Washing and Bathing Facilities	49 (20.42)	51 (21.25)	49 (20.42)	34 (14.17)	57 (23.75)	240 (100)
Creches	12 (5)	15 (6.25)	81 (33.75)	77 (32.08)	55 (22.92)	240 (100)
Hours of Work	121 (50.42)	44 (18.33)	39 (16.25)	20 (8.33)	16 (6.67)	240 (100)
Maximum Permissible Load	62 (25.83)	15 (6.25)	94 (39.17)	39 (16.25)	30 (12.50)	240 (100)
Prohibition of Night work	158 (65.83)	69 (28.75)	2 (0.83)	4 (1.67)	7 (2.92)	240 (100)
Mean	76.29	42.71	51.86	33.14	36	
Standard deviation	48.53	22.02	30.17	24.03	21.62	
<b>'F' test results</b>						
Calculated value of 'F'	1.7681					

P value	0.9613					
Result	Not significant					

Source: Primary data

The calculated value of ‘F’ test is 1.7681 which is not significant as its p value is greater than 0.05 (0.9613>0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Thus, there is no significant difference among the opinion of the women workers in various match factories regarding special provisions available for them in Factories Act, 1948.

**SUGGESTIONS** On the basis of findings of the study, some suggestions may be given.

1. Washing and bathing facilities should be given to the women workers in their work places.
2. Crèches have to be started near the factory premises which help the women workers to keep their kids below six years in the crèches.

**SUMMARY**

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that to provide security against various risks, peculiar to their nature, women workers have been given various rights, benefits, concessions, protection and they are safeguarded under different labour

legislations. The main objective for the enactment of labour laws was to prohibit the violation of rights of women workers and to provide them security and protection. But despite this all, much remains to be achieved. Women workers are still made to suffer discrimination in social and economic spheres and continue to be the most exploited lot. Most of the labour legislations apply to the organised sector only, leaving the un-organised sector, where a majority of the women work, unattended. Even in organised sector, where these legislations apply, the statutory provisions are not strictly complied with. In many cases, it has been found that protective measures such as crèches, maternity benefits, separate toilet and washing facilities etc. are neither provided nor properly maintained. This position must be changed.

**REFERENCES**

1. Khanka. (2016). Human Resource Management, New Delhi: New Century Book Publishers.
2. Pathi, PK. (2012). Labour and Industrial Laws, New Delhi: PHI Publishers.

3. Tripathi, PC. (2015). Human Resource Management, New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India.
4. [www.printingunits.com](http://www.printingunits.com)  
[www.labourlaws.com](http://www.labourlaws.com)