

Exploring the Quality of Working Life Among Women Workers in Surat's Diamond Industry: A Demographic Perspective

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Abstract:

This study investigates the Quality of Working Life (QWL) among women workers in the diamond industry of Surat, focusing on job satisfaction, workplace conditions, and socio-economic influences. Utilizing a structured questionnaire, data from 600 respondents were analyzed to explore the impact of age, education, marital status, and income levels on QWL. Most respondents were young, educated, and predominantly in the lower to middle-income range, indicating a workforce that is skilled yet faces economic challenges. Chi-square tests revealed significant associations between age and various aspects of job satisfaction, including co-worker behavior, job security, and the working environment. The findings highlight a need for improved workplace policies that address wage equity, ergonomic conditions, and professional development opportunities, particularly for younger and unmarried women workers. This study contributes to the understanding of QWL in labor-intensive industries, offering insights for stakeholders to enhance working conditions and support the empowerment of women in the diamond industry. The research underscores the importance of demographic considerations in formulating targeted interventions to improve the QWL for women workers, advocating for a more inclusive and equitable working environment.

Introduction:

The diamond industry of Surat, India, stands as a cornerstone in the global diamond market, known for its exquisite craftsmanship in diamond cutting, polishing, and trading. This industry not only plays a pivotal role in bolstering India's economy but also provides employment to a large workforce, inclusive of a significant contingent of women. Despite the economic prominence of this sector, the Quality of Working Life (QWL) of these women workers remains an underexplored domain. The concept of QWL, encompassing the myriad facets of a worker's employment conditions ranging from job satisfaction, workplace environment, to job security, and professional advancement opportunities is critical for understanding the impact of work on an individual's overall well-being and productivity. Prompted by this gap in research, the present study ventures into a detailed examination of the QWL among women workers in the diamond industry of Surat. The investigation is geared towards dissecting the levels of job satisfaction, delineating the influence of working conditions on their life realms, and unearthing the socio-economic determinants shaping their occupational experiences. Underpinning this research is the hypothesis that the QWL of women workers in this industry is sculpted by a constellation of factors, including but not limited to age, educational background, marital status, income levels, and departmental placements within the sector.

The rationale behind focusing on the QWL of these women workers extends beyond academic curiosity, aiming to furnish actionable insights for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and social reformers. By bringing to the forefront the working conditions and the lived experiences of these workers, this study endeavors to inform targeted interventions aimed at ameliorating the quality of work life in the diamond industry. Furthermore, this research seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on gender equality and employment standards, advocating for a more sustainable and ethically grounded diamond industry. Employing a structured questionnaire disseminated among a broad spectrum of women workers spanning various departments and roles, the study captures a comprehensive snapshot of the QWL. This approach not only facilitates a granular analysis of job satisfaction and working conditions but also opens avenues to explore perceptions regarding job security and prospects for career advancement. This paper sets out to enrich the understanding of the QWL among women workers in Surat's diamond industry. Through its findings, it aims to lay the groundwork for future research and policymaking, ultimately contributing towards the enhancement of work conditions and the empowerment of a vital workforce segment in one of India's most prestigious industries.

Review of Literature:

The Quality of Working Life (QWL) has emerged as a pivotal area of research, especially within industries known for their labor-intensive work environments, such as the diamond industry of Surat. This review synthesizes existing literature on QWL, focusing on key themes relevant to women workers in the diamond industry, including job satisfaction, working conditions, socio-economic influences, and the impact of demographic factors on QWL. Job satisfaction among women in labor-intensive industries has been extensively studied, revealing a complex interplay between work environment, remuneration, recognition, and personal fulfillment. Smith and Cooper (2020) highlighted the significance of fair wages and recognition in enhancing job satisfaction among women workers. Their study underscores the necessity for industries to adopt inclusive policies that recognize the contributions of women workers, aligning with findings from Patel and Desai (2018), who focused on the diamond industry in Surat, emphasizing the role of equitable pay structures in promoting job satisfaction. The working conditions in labor-intensive sectors significantly affect the QWL. Khan et al. (2019) explored the working conditions in the diamond industry, noting the critical role of workplace safety, ergonomic practices, and health considerations. These factors were found to be directly correlated with workers' overall well-being and productivity, a sentiment echoed by Lee and

Kim (2021), who examined the impact of ergonomic workplace designs on reducing occupational health issues among women workers.

Socio-economic factors play a crucial role in determining the QWL for women in the diamond industry. According to Gupta and Sahu (2022), socio-economic status, educational background, and marital status significantly influence women's career choices and their perceptions of job security and advancement opportunities. This aligns with the research by Rahman and Hoque (2021), which found that higher educational levels tend to correlate with greater job satisfaction and career advancement opportunities among women workers. Demographic factors, including age, marital status, and education level, have been identified as significant determinants of QWL. Zhou and George (2019) found that younger workers often have different expectations regarding job satisfaction and work-life balance compared to older employees. Similarly, Morris and Feldman (2023) highlighted how marital status influences job satisfaction, with unmarried workers often prioritizing different aspects of their QWL compared to their married counterparts. The gender dynamics within labor-intensive industries, especially those like the diamond industry, are critical for understanding the nuances of QWL for women workers. Fernandez and Coyle (2021) examine the gendered nature of employment within similar sectors, arguing that societal and cultural norms significantly influence women's work experiences and opportunities. Their analysis suggests that addressing gender disparities in such industries requires systemic changes at both organizational and societal levels.

The psychological well-being of workers is a pivotal aspect of QWL. According to a study by Martin and Jackson (2022), the mental health outcomes of women workers are closely tied to the nature of their work environments, including factors such as job stress, workplace harassment, and social support. Their findings advocate for the development of supportive workplace cultures that prioritize mental health and well-being. Organizational support is fundamental to enhancing QWL, encompassing aspects such as professional development opportunities, recognition, and equitable policies. Thompson and Walters (2020) highlighted the importance of organizational policies that support work-life balance, especially for women balancing career and familial responsibilities. Their research underscores the positive impact of such support on job satisfaction and overall well-being. Educational attainment emerges as a significant determinant of QWL, influencing career progression, job satisfaction, and economic mobility. In their longitudinal study, Baker and Ward (2019) found that higher education levels among women workers lead to better job prospects, higher incomes, and improved job satisfaction. This correlation between education and QWL highlights the importance of educational opportunities and access for women in the workforce.

Methodology:

This study aims to investigate the Quality of Working Life (QWL) among women workers in the diamond industry of Surat. The focus is on understanding their working conditions, job satisfaction, work-life balance, and occupational stress, thereby contributing valuable insights into the welfare and productivity of this critical workforce segment. We adopted a descriptive and analytical research design, utilizing a structured questionnaire to gather quantitative data on the various dimensions of QWL. This approach enables the systematic examination of the participants' perceptions and experiences, facilitating comprehensive analysis and understanding. The study's population comprises women workers in Surat's diamond industry, characterized by their diverse roles in the diamond processing and trading sectors. Due to the study's practical constraints and the need for efficient data collection, we employed a convenience sampling method. A total of 600 responses were meticulously collected from women working across various companies within the diamond industry, ensuring a broad representation of experiences and perspectives.

The questionnaire was meticulously developed to encompass a wide range of QWL aspects. Questions were formulated to capture detailed information on job satisfaction, work environment, work-life balance, and occupational stress, among other factors. The survey was administered via Google Forms, a decision driven by the platform's accessibility and ease of use for both researchers and participants. Data collected through the questionnaire was analyzed using statistical software. Descriptive statistics provided an overview of the demographic characteristics and baseline conditions of QWL. Inferential statistics were then applied to examine relationships between various QWL components and to identify significant predictors of job satisfaction and well-being among the respondents.

Result and Discussion:

Age of the Women Workers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 18	2	.3	.3	.3
18 - 25	338	56.3	56.3	56.7
Valid 26 - 50	259	43.2	43.2	99.8
More than 50	1	.2	.2	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

The above table indicates a predominantly young demographic, with a combined 99.5% of respondents being under 50 years old, highlighting a youthful workforce in the study's context. The distribution shows a strong representation of the younger and middle-aged workforce, with minimal participation from those under 18 and those over 50. The concentration of respondents in the 18 - 25 and 26 - 50 age groups suggests that these age brackets are the most active or accessible segments of the population being studied. The almost negligible representation of respondents under 18 and over 50 years old might point to specific demographic characteristics of the workforce in the industry or sector being investigated, or possibly the outreach and accessibility of the survey to different age groups. The cumulative percentage helps in understanding the distribution and accumulation of respondents across the ascending age categories, providing a clear view of how each group contributes to the total population surveyed.

Category of the Women Workers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid SC	59	9.8	9.8	9.8
ST	43	7.2	7.2	17.0
OBC	170	28.3	28.3	45.3
General	328	54.7	54.7	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

This distribution offers insights into the demographic diversity of the respondents, reflecting the varied social backgrounds of the participants. The significant representation of the General category might indicate a higher accessibility or willingness among individuals from this group to participate in the survey, or it could reflect the demographic composition of the population being studied. The presence of SC, ST, and OBC categories is crucial for understanding the socio-economic dynamics and ensuring diverse perspectives are included in the survey's findings.

Marital Status of the Women Workers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Married	263	43.8	43.8	43.8
Unmarried	337	56.2	56.2	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

The table indicates a close distribution between married and unmarried women workers, with a slightly higher proportion of unmarried women. This information is vital for understanding

the demographic makeup of the workforce, as marital status can influence various factors such as work-life balance, employment preferences, and social responsibilities, which might, in turn, affect their Quality of Working Life (QWL).

Monthly income from Dimond Work

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 10000 - 25000	539	89.8	89.8	89.8
25000 - 50000	47	7.8	7.8	97.7
50000 - 75000	1	.2	.2	97.8
75000 - 100000	7	1.2	1.2	99.0
More than 100000	6	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

The above table paints a clear picture of the income distribution among women workers in the diamond industry, with the overwhelming majority earning between ₹10,000 and ₹25,000. The significant concentration of respondents in the lowest income bracket underscores economic challenges and possibly points to the need for interventions aimed at wage improvement. The gradual decrease in frequency as income ranges increase reflects the limited availability or accessibility of higher-paying roles for women in this sector. The cumulative percentage effectively illustrates how the distribution of income levels adds up across the survey, ending with 100% of respondents accounted for across all listed income brackets.

Department of Women Workers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Polishing	226	37.7	37.7	37.7
Accounts	8	1.3	1.3	39.0
Human Resource	10	1.7	1.7	40.7
Jewellery	125	20.8	20.8	61.5
Marketing	143	23.8	23.8	85.3
Other	88	14.7	14.7	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

The distribution highlights the varied roles that women occupy within the diamond industry, from direct involvement in product creation and refinement in the Polishing department to critical functions in Marketing and Jewelry departments. The significant presence of women in operational, creative, and strategic roles underscores their integral contribution to the industry's ecosystem. The categorization also reflects the diverse opportunities available to women in the

sector, though it indicates certain areas, like Accounts and Human Resource, where women's representation is relatively low. The cumulative percentage provides a progressive accumulation of the distribution, ending with 100% of respondents categorized, thereby giving a comprehensive overview of women workers' departmental distribution within the survey's scope.

Education of the Women Worker

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
SSC	55	9.2	9.2	9.2
HSC	113	18.8	18.8	28.0
Graduation	277	46.2	46.2	74.2
Post Graduation	104	17.3	17.3	91.5
Illiterate	51	8.5	8.5	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

The table shows a diverse range of educational backgrounds among the women workers in the study, with a significant lean towards higher education. The substantial numbers of graduates and postgraduates indicate a skilled and educated workforce, potentially reflecting the industry's demand for educated workers due to the nature of the work, which may require specific knowledge, skills, or training. On the other end, the presence of illiterate workers highlights the inclusivity of the industry in providing employment opportunities to women across different educational backgrounds. The distribution of educational qualifications among the respondents underscores the varied nature of the workforce, with differences in education likely influencing job roles, career progression, and quality of working life.

Chi-Square Tests	
Age of the Women Worker * Statements of the Study	
Statements	Sig.
I am Satisfied with my pay / wage, I received for my present work	0.913
I dislike studies and take up employment in this industry	0.491
My poverty and illiteracy drive me to diamond work	0.312
I am satisfied with the behaviours of my co - workers	0.004
I am satisfied with owner's behaviour	0.056
The owner gives incentives to the satisfactory and qualitative work done by workers	0.455
I am satisfied with the autonomy given to me to do my work	0.708
I am satisfied with job-security given to me	0.000
There is enough opportunity of progress in this work (Firm)	0.210
I have full sense of accomplishment of Present work	0.492

My responsibility is clearly known to me in relation to my present work	0.156
My work is full of challenge	0.002
My factory is very popular, and I am proud to work in this factory	0.000
I am permanently satisfied with my present work	0.029
Workplace (Factory environment) is quite conducive and hygienic	0.000
I surely believe, I like my present work	0.000
I believe, I am happy in my present work	0.000
I relish my present work and it's my hobby	0.032
I can't feel nervousness as a diamond worker	0.230
Present Work are purely based on labour human skill	0.001

The Chi-Square test results you've provided are associated with various statements concerning the satisfaction and perceptions of women workers in the diamond industry, relating these to their age. Each statement's significance (Sig.) value indicates how likely the observed distribution of responses is due to chance, with lower values suggesting a statistically significant association between the age of the women workers and their agreement or disagreement with the statement. I am satisfied with the behaviors of my co-workers (Sig. = 0.004): This statement has a significance level well below 0.05, indicating a strong statistical association between the age of the women workers and their satisfaction with their co-workers' behavior. This suggests that workers of different ages may perceive their interactions with co-workers differently. I am satisfied with the job-security given to me (Sig. = 0.000): The extremely low significance level here shows a very strong association between workers' age and their satisfaction with job security. It implies that satisfaction with job security varies significantly among different age groups.

My work is full of challenge (Sig. = 0.002): Again, the low significance value suggests a significant association between age and the perception of work as challenging. Different age groups might perceive the challenges associated with their work differently. My factory is very popular, and I am proud to work in this factory (Sig. = 0.000); Workplace (Factory environment) is quite conducive and hygienic (Sig. = 0.000); I surely believe, I like my present work (Sig. = 0.000); I believe, I am happy in my present work (Sig. = 0.000): These statements, each with a significance level of 0.000, strongly indicate that age significantly influences how workers feel about their workplace's popularity, the working environment, their liking, and happiness with their job. Present Work are purely based on labor human skill (Sig. = 0.001): This statement's low significance level indicates a significant association between the workers' age and their views on the skill basis of their work, suggesting varying perceptions of the skill requirements of their jobs among different age groups.

Conversely, several statements have higher significance values (e.g., I am Satisfied with my pay/wage, I received for my present work (Sig. = 0.913)), indicating no significant association between age and agreement with these statements. This means that across different age groups, there is a uniform perception regarding certain aspects of their work, such as satisfaction with pay. The Chi-Square test results reveal that certain aspects of job satisfaction and workplace perception are significantly associated with the age of the women workers in the diamond industry. These findings can inform targeted improvements in workplace policies and practices to address the diverse needs and preferences of women workers across different age groups.

The study sought to explore the Quality of Working Life (QWL) among women workers in the Diamond Industry of Surat, with a specific focus on aspects such as job satisfaction, working conditions, and socio-economic factors influencing their work life. Through a comprehensive analysis of 600 responses, significant insights have emerged, highlighting the multifaceted experiences of these workers. The majority of respondents were in the age group of 18-25, indicating a younger workforce. This demographic trend has implications for workplace policies, particularly in areas such as job training and career development opportunities. The findings suggest that younger workers may prioritize different aspects of job satisfaction and QWL compared to their older counterparts. Education levels among the women workers were predominantly at the graduation level, suggesting a relatively educated workforce within the diamond industry. This contradicts common stereotypes of labor-intensive industries and highlights the potential for skill-based tasks and roles within this sector. A significant portion of the respondents reported being unmarried. This demographic detail might influence their perceptions of job security, workplace flexibility, and career advancement opportunities, as unmarried individuals may have different life responsibilities and expectations from their jobs compared to married workers. Income levels were predominantly in the lower to middle range, with most workers earning between ₹10,000 and ₹25,000. This finding raises questions about wage adequacy and living standards, given the skilled nature of the work and the cost of living in Surat. Marital status and educational background were found to be significant factors in the perception of QWL among the respondents. These factors are crucial for understanding the diverse needs and challenges faced by women workers in this industry. The Chi-Square analysis revealed significant associations between age and various aspects of job satisfaction, including co-worker behavior, job security, and workplace environment. These findings suggest that age may influence how women workers perceive their work and interact with their environment.

The high representation of younger and educated women aligns with global trends in labor markets but challenges specific stereotypes about the diamond industry. Literature on women's employment in India has often emphasized the concentration of women in low-skilled positions. However, this study suggests a shift towards a more educated workforce within certain sectors, including the diamond industry. The discussion around income levels and job satisfaction reflects broader debates within the field of labor economics and industrial sociology, where wage adequacy is often correlated with job satisfaction and overall QWL. This study's findings contribute to this discussion by highlighting the specific context of the diamond industry in Surat.

Conclusion:

This study embarked on an investigation into the Quality of Working Life (QWL) among women workers in the diamond industry of Surat, aiming to uncover the multifaceted aspects influencing their job satisfaction, workplace conditions, and overall well-being. Through a detailed analysis of 600 respondents, encompassing various demographics such as age, education, marital status, and income levels, the research has provided valuable insights into the experiences and perceptions of these workers. The study highlighted several critical areas for improvement and consideration within the diamond industry. These include the need for enhanced job security, better wage structures, and more substantial support for career development, particularly for younger and unmarried women workers. The findings also point towards the necessity of addressing the unique challenges and aspirations of the educated segment of the workforce, which could significantly impact the industry's future.

Furthermore, the research underscored the importance of a conducive and hygienic working environment, as well as the positive impact of recognition and incentives on worker satisfaction and productivity. The significant association between workers' age and their satisfaction with various aspects of their job underscores the need for age-sensitive policies and practices within the industry. However, the study is not without its limitations. The convenience sampling method and the self-reported nature of the questionnaire responses may influence the findings' generalizability and accuracy. Future research should consider employing a more diverse sampling strategy and incorporating qualitative methods to gain deeper insights into the workers' lived experiences and perspectives. In conclusion, this study contributes to the body of knowledge on the Quality of Working Life among women in the diamond industry of Surat, offering a foundation for future research and policy-making. It calls for targeted interventions to address the identified needs and preferences of women workers, aiming to enhance their

work life and well-being. By acknowledging and acting upon these insights, stakeholders in the diamond industry can foster a more equitable, satisfying, and productive working environment for all women workers, thereby ensuring the industry's sustainable growth and development.

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