CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

“The mother's lap is the first school for every child”

As very well said by a wise man, mother’s lap is his first temple; mother is his foremost God. Women are the creator and destroyer of society. Women can make a family, thus making the society a heaven by removing the wrongs and evils from it. Our society views motherhood as something very special. Mothers should provide security and stability for their children. An ideal mother must sacrifice many of her own wants and desires for the benefit of her child and should teach him/her the ethics of being a good citizen. An ideal mother tries her best to carry out the goal to make her home a paradise for her children. Earlier women stayed at home. But the financial demands on the Indian families are becoming fiercer by day. The sky rocketing cost of living, increasing expenses on education of children, increasing cost of housing properties in India force every family in India to look for ways and means of increasing the household income. As a result, women in India who were mostly known as homemakers are forced to go for jobs and take up even careers that were considered only suitable for men such as working in night shifts in call centers or BPOs. They are left with no option but to spend for their families in all possible ways.

Working women in India are faced with lot more challenges than their counterparts in the other parts of the world. In India men do not share on most of the household chores, it is women who have to cook, clean the house, do the dishes, wash clothes, get their children ready for school etc. Men just take care of few chores that
are to be dealt outside the house. So the major burden of running the family is on the shoulders of women. It was alright for women to handle all the chores as long as they were homemakers. Now with their increasing need for getting some income for the family, they have to work all the more harder. They could find very little time to spend with their children.

1.2 ORIGIN OF THE PROBLEM

Women have got freedom to learn and work. But there is an invisible thread wrapped on their body. Women’s access to paid work is crucial to their self-reliance and the economic well-being of dependent family members. Women work in different occupations than men, almost always with lower status and pay.

In developing countries like India, many women work as unpaid family labourers in subsistence agriculture and household enterprises. Many women also work in the informal sector, where their remuneration is unstable, and their access to funds to improve their productivity is limited at best. And whatever other work women do, they have the major responsibility for most household work, including the care of children and other family members.

“Women’s mass entry into the labor market has not only created the conditions necessary for women to achieve economic independence, but has also revealed the depth of the culturally conditioned gender inequality that continues to perpetuate their dependency in public and private life. Analysis of the nature, causes and consequences of women’s economic dependency show that women are strongly dependent on their employers, husbands and other members of the family and on the state.”\(^1\)
A qualified woman may insist on working to maintain an effective career and be financially independent. “It should not be forgotten that economic independence is a potent tool of and for emancipation, that is, it is emancipation multiplier or a redemptive mechanism. Of course, in a patriarchal set up, employed women have to face apart from role conflict, double oppression, one at home and other at place of employment. This is so because a woman’s work domestic or official is regarded as non–work and supplementary respectively. The household drudgery, parenting (child care) etc., remains a woman’s prerogative and her husband finds it a demeaning activity, not worth (leave cooperation) the mind’s or body’s exertion.

Further it is argued that even many “working” women never allow their husbands to enter kitchen or wash their clothes giving rise to a peculiar Indian phenomenon of “working housewife”. This may be happening but to say that women love to do cooking, washing etc., is not just far, but far, far, far away from truth. Women are made to love this because of patriarchised socialization and genderised anaesthetization.”

A working mother, especially one who has the good fortune to be able to balance her home and work, enjoys the stimulation that a job or career provides. She develops the ability of raising a useful member of society and at the same time gains financial independence. Along with motherhood, work adds to the completeness of being a woman. As working mother, she is independent and empowered, especially if she is from a low socio economic background. And that is the essence of her womanhood. “According to Nathawat and Asha Mathur, (1993) working women report higher scores on general health, life satisfaction and self esteem measures and
lower scores on hopelessness, insecurity and anxiety compared with the housewives. They have better marital adjustment and subjective well-being than housewives.”

“It is an open truth that working women have to face problems just by virtue of their being women. Working women here are referred to those who are in paid employment. Social attitude to the role of women lags much behind the law. This attitude which considers women fit for certain jobs and not others colors those who recruit employees.”

In deprived countries, women bear the burden of responsibilities of being wives, mothers, educator and carers; at the same time a part of labor force. In 25-33% households, they are the prime source of income. Difficulty in balancing work and family, unequal access to training and promotion, and sex stereotyping and discrimination continue to be barriers for working women.

1.4 NEED FOR WOMEN’S EMPLOYMENT

Employment is an important factor contributing to the status of women in the family. “We can’t say that women don’t perform productive work. But due to social conditioning, the household work of women is not counted in the category of productive work. Whether their household work is recognized by society as productive or unproductive, the fact remains that they have been traditionally in the state of perpetual dependence. This has also contributed to their low status in society. Industrialization opened opportunities for women to seek gainful employment outside the home. Economic independence has contributed a lot towards the improvement of women’s lot in society. Economic pressure is the main factor for women’s employment. Women also opt to work in order to face future crisis or economic disaster. They are also engaged in earning extra money due to inflation and low income of husband. Lower class women work in order to fulfill the need of the family whereas middle class women work in order to raise the standard of living. Moreover,
the life styles have become so costly now-a-days that a single earner in the family can’t afford to meet all the requirements. Women’s employment, therefore, has become an important element in women’s development.”

“In a study Agbayani, Siewert et al. (1997) have found that women with spouses and children and of financial need are more likely to work than others.”

1.5 PROBLEMS OF WORKING WOMEN

For the career women, life is not rosy. It depends on her coping mechanism. She has heavy “role strain” which is produced by multiple demands placed on her by her employer, profession and obligations as a mother, wife and person in her own right. Working women have to balance their domestic responsibilities (household chorus) and the occupational demands outside the home which results in stress, affecting their mental health. Eve teasing and sexual harassment are found at the working places. They are unable to nourish their young babies after childbirth. They are unable to take food in time and hence become weak and affected by malnutrition.”

The problems of women are discussed under various headings as under:

a. FAMILIAL PROBLEMS

“Familial problems of working women with regard to their income and economic status (savings, expenditure, etc) support from family (sharing responsibilities, helping in professional growth etc) and decision-making (on marriage, family planning, shifting residence, transfer, sales, purchase, religious practices, festival celebrations, education of children, etc.) lead to arbitrary deprivation of liberty a type of invisible violence. For gainful employment of women, their problems must be identified and ameliorated.”
“According to Rama Rao and Sandhya Shenoy, N. (2007) women’s career is affected more by their family responsibilities i.e. dual role. Physical facilities are by and large not compatible to working women and their participation is low in professional and employees association, training, seminars and conferences.”

b. OCCUPATIONAL PROBLEMS

Women’s work in developing economies, such as India, does not necessarily present an opportunity to fight poverty. On the contrary, though women are contributing enormously to the social and economic product at national and global levels, they remain at the bottom in the hierarchy of power and rewards in the workplace. They are treated as a source of cheap, unskilled and secondary labour that can be hired and fired to suit the requirements of the employer. “In the same way, in the workplace, if a woman is assertive, she becomes a threat to others. If she is submissive she becomes the "weaker section". If she wishes to be accepted, she must not be too competent in her job. If she wants to do her job to her satisfaction, she faces the prospect of being resentful, considered over-ambitious, domineering and devoid of feminine qualities. These paradoxical situations make her vulnerable to high-handedness, arrogance and crude show of power, when she suspects that she is subject to victimization because of her being a woman. A woman in revolt, a woman having identity of her own is a concept totally alien to Indian culture.”

“Tharakan (1992) has observed that professional working women (Doctors, Engineers and Lawyers) experienced greater work related stress than non professional working women (clerks, officers and teachers) because the expectations of technocrats were much higher than the non-technocrats.”
“Studies on stress and women managers (Yang, Nini, 1998) show that although men and women managers do not find much difference in the substance of their jobs, women managers face problems of prejudice and discrimination from co-workers and from the organization as a whole.”

“In a study Bhatnagar Deepti (1987) has found a widespread lukewarm attitude towards women managers. Though women hold a much more favourable attitude than men, yet even female responses are not unequivocally positive.”

**c. LACK OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN:**

For equal participation of women in the work force, Ministry of Labour had set up a Women Labour Cell in 1975 with the intention to focus the condition of working women and bring improvement in them. Yet the work participation of women in both organized and unorganized sector is yet to improve.

Not getting equal pay, being denied opportunities for growth and promotion are some examples of the kind of economic exploitation that women are subjected to in certain sectors. In spite of legislation in place, (Equal Remuneration Act, 1976) it is widely observed that women are usually underpaid as compared to their male counterparts performing the same job. Delhi High Court in 2005 declared that unequal pay is not only a violation of the said act but also, of Article 14 of the Constitution, right to equality. Furthermore, India is a signatory to the International Labour Organisation Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women, specifically to Article 11 that deals with the elimination of discrimination in the field of employment. However, in spite of allegiance to an International Convention, having a specific legislation in force and a High Court ruling declaring equal pay to be incorporated in fundamental rights, the stark reality of the situation is different. Women still get underpaid. However, this
problem in the organized specialized sector is guised and more subtle. Women are
discriminated when it comes to promotion opportunities and not the blatant
discrimination on the basis of pay for equal work.

d. POOR PHYSICAL HEALTH

“Physical endurance and mental strength are must for women to take
up the challenges and to face the world with courage. In India, women generally
neglect their health. Members of her family are her prime focus and she hardly finds
time to take care of herself.”

“Working women in India are forced to perform dual roles, wage
earner and household manager, to the detriment of their health. Depending on their
profession, working women may face stresses such as shift work (including night
duties), transportation problems, frequent job transfers, and lack of child care near the
workplace. That they are unable to be fully attentive to the physical and mental
development of their children can cause considerable distress. Women’s labor force
participation has been linked to emotional depression, chronic fatigue, malnutrition,
high blood pressure, adverse pregnancy outcomes, and musculoskeletal disorders. The
burden of ill health associated with women’s employment in India impedes both
family life and national development.”

e. POOR MENTAL HEALTH

“In both developed and developing countries, women living in urban
settings are at greatest risk to be assaulted by intimates. A meta-analysis of 13-
epidemiological studies in different regions of India revealed an overall prevalence
rate of mental disorders in women of 64.8 per 1000. In an editorial on urban health
issued on The Lancet, it was stated that “…to keep cities profitable into the 21st
century more attention will need to be paid to aspects of health other than the purely physical.” Mental ill-health is a growing problem and one that urgently requires attention.”

“A study by Yoko Araki et al (2007) has revealed that female workers reported high rates of complaints of eye discomfort, fatigue, headache and menstrual pain. Such symptoms are associated with irritability and depression. Amount of overtime works, marital status in the 30-44 age groups and the presence of children were found to be important factors in determining health status. Workers who performed frequent overtime work had a greater need for mental health management by doctors and nurses.”

“Sexual relationships can also be quite strained in working mothers. Much of it can be contributed to lack of time and to fatigue, especially where both partners have long working hours.” Women’s lack of empowerment and both financial and emotional dependence has restricted their self-expression and choices in life. This, along with family, social and work pressures, has a definite impact on women’s mental health.

f. POOR EMOTIONAL HEALTH

The families’ emotional climate and mother’s mental health are both important factors that determine the effect of employment of mothers on the family unit. “Bawa (2001) has suggested that all categories of employed women coming from a good home environment have a better decision making pattern than their counterparts from a poor home environment.”
“In a study Mukhopadhyay, S. et al (1993) have revealed that working mothers showed lower anxiety level than non working mothers who have higher level of anxiety and it increases with the age of children.”

**g. LACK OF ADJUSTMENT**

The old family system has undergone a major change due to increase in women’s employment. The adjustment problem resulting from employment or engagement in any work can be seen in two aspects, first level of adjustment at the working place, second family and marital adjustment. Women face problem at the working place, sometime they are also exploited by the higher authorities. Women also feel fatigue and monotony after coming back from the work place, more over after coming back they have to look after the household work and their children. This situation sometimes creates maladjustment among the women.

**h. STRESS**

Working women have multiple roles to play as a wife, a mother and an employee. Being subject to dual demands of home and workplace, they are liable to face crisis of adjustment which may cause stress and strain. Stress is built up in the concept of role which is conceived as the position a person occupies in a system. “What creates maximum ambivalence and conflict is the “childcare” in women. Women experience increasing anxiety about choosing between adopting the traditional role of wife and mother or the career. Choosing to have both requires much courage, confidence and energy and desire to face recurrent emotional turmoil and stress. Women also find difficult to leave work problems at work situation and also often carry home problems to work. The so called “speed of unwinding” after work is a key determinant of the total stress load to which the women are greatly subjected to.
The slow epinephrine decrease will enable them to have a carryover effect of stress to the leisure time activities or any other switch over from a work situation. The epinephrine flow is influenced by psycho physiological and psycho endocrinological factors.  

“In a study Harshpinder and Paramjit Aujla (2006) have found that working women were more stressed as compared to non working women. Their stressors were pleasing others and overburden of work.” According to Andrade, C. et al. (1999) employment may benefit women but stress their husbands.  

Other occupational stressors are work overload when there are too many demands and work underload when the female gets involved in monotonous routine jobs which are not intellectually challenging. “A study by Afroza Hossain Rahman (2004) supports this view that women garment workers are bored with same type of work. Due to long duration of work they cannot bare the burden of household works.” During the career pursuit women have many breaks and they start all over again depending on their husbands transfer or familial demands. This checkered career history brings about inadequate opportunity for career development and advancement. There are some factors intrinsic to job to be considered in stress. Depending on their profession, working women may face stresses such as shift work (including night duties), transportation problems, frequent job transfers, and lack of child care near the workplace. “Patrij Kumari and Singh, A P. (2000) in their study revealed that there is a significant difference between working women and housewives regarding their life stress state trait anxiety, locus of control, Type A behaviour and personal efficacy.”
The dual-earning couple is a new prototype that reflects the increasing educational and career aspirations of women. A significant proportion of these women in the workforce comprises of wives and mothers whose employment status demands a radical change in their pattern, activities, commitments and responsibilities, requiring a reassessment of the family environment. In India the work participation rate for women has increased in the recent decades. The proportion of women in the workforce in 1981 was 19.67% and it rose to 22.73% in 1991, further rising to 25.68% in 2001. On the flipside, psychosocial studies have shown that dual-earning couples in India have a poorer quality of marital life compared to single-earning couples. Sources of stress in the lives of working women emerged from a lack of time to attend to multiple roles, presence of young children (6-12 years) in the family and additional responsibility at work in the form of promotions. The most common outcome of stress for the working woman was found to be poor mental and physical health resulting in depression, anxiety, asthma and colitis.

“The study “Preventive Healthcare and Corporate Female Workforce” (2009), also said that long hours and working under strict deadlines cause up to 75% of working women to suffer from depression or general anxiety disorder, compared to women with lesser levels of psychological demand at work.”

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Reports show that many women in India have been victimized by sexual harassment in the workplace. Sexual harassment is an instance of a misuse of power. The patriarchal nature of the society invests men with power, and some men misuse this power for the sake of their sexual urges. Also, power is invested with a
mean when they hold powerful positions in the workplace. This power also is often misused against the opposite sex. Many cases of sexual harassment go unreported and unnoticed as women often exhibit reluctance to reveal that they have suffered both in the workplace and in the house.

ROLE CONFLICT

“Role conflict is usually seen when a woman has to perform simultaneously the roles of a housewife and an employee. Her involvement in the profession outside home may affect her relations with her husband, children and in-laws; in case the latter don’t realise working woman’s difficulties and expect her to do everything a housewife may do for the family.”

“Mishra, P. and Bajpai, V. (1998) have found that working women have conflict between multiple roles. Certainly they have spill over effect penetrating into their marital life, but the extent varies with the area of marital relations.”

“Prasad (2001) found out that for the working couples, work stress and its spill over to family life were positively correlated with the frequency of resorting to violence against children.”

“Sear, Healter, A. and Galambos, Nancy, L. (1992) have showed that two earner couples with adolescents indicated support for spill over model in which women’s work stress and global stress mediated link between their work conditions.”

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Violence against women is assuming serious proportion in our society. It occurs in many forms both inside and outside the home. The problem of domestic violence is more serious in nature. The agents of this violence may be in-laws or husband or sometimes even parents. It is not unusual that even highly educated and
economically independent women become prey of domestic violence. “In a study Chaudhary, A. et al. (2009) have found that domestic violence was found to be significantly higher in working women.”

Women are particularly vulnerable and they often disproportionately bear the burden of changes associated with urbanization. In the rural set up, they would work mostly at homes but the predominantly nuclear set up of the cities and sheer economic is forcing women to venture out. Domestic violence is also highly prevalent in urban areas. “In a study Ceballo et al. (2004) have found that lower socio-economic status, even within poor communities, and stressful life events have a direct relationship to domestic conflict. Domestic abuse was in turn associated with woman’s mental health such that greater domestic conflict was related to higher reports of depressive effect and symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder.”

m PROBLEMS OF HOME BASED WORKERS

“In a study Martha chen et al. (1999) have analysed that home based work is an important source of employment throughout the world, especially for women. The informal sector often has direct ties to the formal sector and is growth promoting.” “Yawen Cheng (2007) has found the working hours are long for the domestic workers with an average of 13 hours per day. Feelings of home sickness and loneliness were common and a great majority of these women reported having musculoskeletal discomforts, menstrual pain, and headache and irritating stomach.”

1.6 STEPS TAKEN TO ERADICATE THE PROBLEMS OF WORKING WOMEN

I EDUCATION

The educational advancement of women in India is not perceived as an important characteristic since education is perceived as irrelevant to their roles. For
over a thousand years, they were kept away from the corridors of education. The equality of women in status and opportunity is guaranteed in the 1955 Constitution of India and by the government. Although achievements by women in the local and national levels exist, a majority of the women in the rural areas occupy lower positions. The problems for working women are based on economic, social, cultural, and educational factors. To improve this situation, successive Five Year Plans have been instituted by the government to emphasize women’s education at the elementary, secondary, and university levels. Some factors which present problems in educational development are found in the decreasing growth rate at the elementary level, an increasing number of dropouts, a high rate of illiteracy, the loss of literacy, and social and cultural attitudes. Some alternatives to the traditional educational approach can be more effective in the education of women. These approaches include functional literacy programs and non formal education which will enable women to eventually become a vital source of power in the process of national development. (EC)

Educational level of employed women is closely associated with their problems. According to Rajakumari Amirthagowri, A.J.A. (2008) working women with only school level of education are affected significantly with more familial problems relating to income and status, and family support than their counter-parts, the working women with collegiate education. “Ritu Singh, S. K. et al (2006) have found that women who are employed and educated up to post graduation and graduation are more socially adjustable than women non-employed and educated up to matric and below.”35 “According to Chandra Vathana, M. (2009) there is a close relationship occurs between the academic achievement of children and the employment of their mothers.”36
II  Laws for Women Workers

“We shall glance at a few laws which aim at protecting and promoting women workers’ rights.

**Equal Wages Act (1976):** It applies to the organized sector involving the principle of ‘same work, same pay’ and prevents discrimination against women. Labour Officers are appointed to supervise the implementation of the law. If there are different wage structures for different kinds of work, it is permissible.

**Industries Act (1948):** This act forbids employing women workers in dangerous jobs like cleaning machines in motion (**Section 22**). Every factory which employs women should have a crèche attached to it (**Sec. 48**). It is applicable to units which employ more than thirty women workers. Provision would be made for a hall with facilities to leave the children under the age of six.

**Working hours:** **Section 66** of the Industries Act stipulates that women workers should be given work between 6 A.M. and 7 P.M. only. If absolutely necessary, working hours may be changed with the approval of the labour officer. Women workers should not be given work after 10 P.M except under shift system.

**Leave facilities:** Women workers, in addition to the weekly and special holidays are entitled to maternity leave with pay.

**Shift System:** In some occupations women employees outnumber men. Services like nursing, telephone and information technology have to adopt a modified shift system. Working schedules are (i) 6A.M. to 2P.M. (ii) 2P.M to 10P.M. (iii) 10P.M to 6A.M. If they have to do overtime work beyond 10P.M., the management should provide them transport and escort to send them home safely.
Plantation Workers Act (1951): The Labour Act of 1948 applies to plantation (coffee, tea, rubber etc.) workers. In addition to that the Plantation Workers Act (1951) provides for the health care of women workers. ”

The Government has proposed an Amendment to the Maternity Benefits Act, 1961. The government proposed to extend paid maternity leave from three to six months to curb incidence of maternal and infant deaths.

The sexual harassment of women at work place - bill, 2006 (prevention, prohibition and redressal). A bill conferring upon women the right to protection against sexual harassment and to protect the right to livelihood and towards that end for the prevention and redressal of sexual harassment of women was enacted on 2006.

1.7 Facilities extended by the Central Government

The Constitution of India not only grants equality to women but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women for neutralising the socio-economic, educational and political disadvantages that they could be facing. The Fundamental Rights, among others ensure equality before the law, equal protection of law, prohibit discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and grant equality of opportunity to all citizens in matters relating to employment.

Article 14 confers on men and women equal rights and opportunities in the political, economic and social spheres. Article 15 prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex etc. Article 15(3) makes a special provision enabling the State to make affirmative discriminations in favour of women. Similarly, Article 16 provides for equality of opportunities in
matter of public appointments for all citizens. **Article 39(a)** further mentions that the State shall direct its policy towards securing all citizens, men and women, equally, the right to means of livelihood, while **Article 39(c)** ensures equal pay for equal work. **Article 42** directs the State to make provision for ensuring just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief. Above all, the Constitution imposes a fundamental duty on every citizen through **Articles 15 (A) (e)** to renounce the practices derogatory to the dignity of women.

In the 6th pay commission by Govt of India for Central Govt employees, they have made a special provision for women employees by introducing six months of maternity leave and 730 days of child care leave which is applicable upto two child only and this child care leave they can take any time and in any number of slot but upto 18 years of age of the child.

### 1.8 FACILITY EXTENDED BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT

“Tamil Nadu government has announced a six-month maternity leave for government women employees (2011, May 17).”

### 1.9 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Though Indian women are far more independent and aware of their legal rights, such as right to work, equal treatment, property and maintenance, a majority of women remain unaware of these rights. There are other factors that affect their quality of life such as age of marriage, extent of literacy, role in the family and so on. In many families, women do not have a voice in anything while in several families; the women may have a dominating role. Those who are economically independent and literate live the kind of life that other women tend to envy about. This disparity is also a cause for worry because balanced development is not taking
place. The result is that the empowerment of woman in India is highly unbalanced and with huge gaps.

Moreover, "The mother's heart is the child's schoolroom." -- Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887). A child learns values, ethics and etiquettes from his/ her first school- Mother. She has a role to play to build our nation as the children are the future of the nation. Children are like wet cement, whatever falls on them makes an impression and it is mother who moulds her at this stage. Without the assistance of mother, the child may discover an erroneous path and turn out to be criminal or terrorist. So mother plays an important role to formulate a civilized society. The character of a person is built in the hands of his/her mother. The role of mother in present context is more prominent. We have today society that is more characterless and deviation from basic religion as no religion teaches to adopt wrong practice to garner wealth. Today society is more and more on deteriorating lifestyle. Use of drugs is on increase. Youth use drugs, alcohol and sex at early age. Late night parties and call center culture is spoiling the society. People go for more easy available junk food rather than home cook food. Obesity is increasing with well to do families while poor people suffer from malnutrition. In order to treat the problem from its roots and to save the next generation the women’s problems should be taken care of. Only if the problems of working women are under control, their focus on their children will be fruitful.

As a working woman of having sixteen years of experience the investigator wanted to analyse the problems in her own place. A deep study of the problem will help to identify the reason for their problems thereby help them to minimize the problems as well as that of the younger generation who are the future
citizens. These reasons motivated the investigator to select the topic as to study the problems of working women in Thoothukudi district.

1.10 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present investigation is captioned as “An Empirical Study on the Problems of Working Women in Thoothukudi District.”

1.11 VARIABLES EMPLOYED

I. Independent variables

Independent variables selected for this study are age, caste, religion, educational status, no. of children, occupation, type of family, marital status, monthly income and nativity.

II. Dependent variables

The dependent variables employed in this study are as follows:

1. Attitude
2. Physical health and hygiene
3. Mental health
4. Adjustment
5. Personal problems
6. Familial problems and
7. Occupational problems

1.12 DEFINITION OF THE TERMS

Empirical

The word 'empirical' means 'based only on observation or experiment.' So 'empirical evidence' is evidence that is based on observation / experiment.
Problem

Etymologically problem means anything thrown forward, hindrance, obstacle, anything projecting, a headland and promontory.

Working woman

A woman who is gainfully employed is considered as working woman in the study.

Attitude

Attitude is a predisposition or a tendency to respond positively or negatively towards a certain idea, object, person, or situation. Attitude influences an individual’s choice of action, and responses to challenges, incentives, and rewards (together called stimuli).

Adjustment

Adjustment in psychology is the behavioral process by which humans and other animals maintain equilibrium among their various needs or between their needs and the obstacles of their environments. A sequence of adjustment begins when a need is felt and ends when it is satisfied.

Physical health

Health can be defined as a state of complete well-being and physical health as a state of physical well-being in which an individual is mechanically fit to perform his daily activities and duties without any problem.

Mental health

A state of emotional and psychological well-being in which an individual is able to use his or her cognitive and emotional capabilities, function in society and meet the ordinary demands of everyday life.
1.13 NATURE OF THE STUDY

The present study is an empirical analysis. It is taken essentially with the intention of analyzing the problems of working women in Thoothukudi district covering the objectives under Section I, Section II and Section III.

1.14 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present study are as follows:

Section I

1. To find out the level of attitude of working women in terms of the following independent variables.

   a. Age     : below 30 / 30-40 / above 40
   b. Caste   : SC / ST / BC / MBC / OC
   c. Religion: Hindu / Muslim / Christian
   d. Educational status: educated / uneducated
   e. Type of family: single / joint
   f. Marital status: married / unmarried
   g. No. of children: 1 to 2 / 2 and above / no child
   h. Occupation: daily wage / government job / private job / self employment
   i. Monthly income: below Rs.2000 / Rs.2000 - Rs.5000 / Rs.5001-Rs.10,000 / above Rs.10,000
   j. Nativity : rural / urban

2. To find out the level of physical health and hygiene of working women in terms of the above said independent variables.

3. To find out the level of mental health of working women in terms of the above said independent variables.
4. To find out the level of adjustment of working women in terms of the above said independent variables.

5. To find out the level of personal problems of working women in terms of the above said independent variables.

6. To find out the level of familial problems of working women in terms of the above said independent variables.

7. To find out the level of occupational problems of working women in terms of the above said independent variables.

Section II

8. To find out the significant mean difference in the attitude of working women in terms of the independent variables.

9. To find out the significant mean difference in the physical health and hygiene of working women in terms of the independent variables.

10. To find out the significant mean difference in the mental health of working women in terms of the independent variables.

11. To find out the significant mean difference in the adjustment of working women in terms of the independent variables.

12. To find out the significant mean difference in the personal problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

13. To find out the significant mean difference in the familial problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

14. To find out the significant mean difference in the occupational problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.
Section III

15. To find out the correlation between attitude and personal problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

16. To find out the correlation between physical health and hygiene and personal problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

17. To find out the correlation between mental health and personal problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

18. To find out the correlation between adjustment and personal problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

19. To find out the correlation between attitude and familial problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

20. To find out the correlation between physical health and hygiene and familial problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

21. To find out the correlation between mental health and familial problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

22. To find out the correlation between adjustment and familial problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

23. To find out the correlation between attitude and occupational problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

24. To find out the correlation between physical health and hygiene and occupational problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

25. To find out the correlation between mental health and occupational problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.
26. To find out the correlation between adjustment and occupational problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

1.15 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Section I

H1. The level of attitude of working women in terms of the independent variables is low.

H2. The level of physical health and hygiene of working women in terms of the independent variables is low.

H3. The level of mental health of working women in terms of the independent variables is low.

H4. The level of adjustment of working women in terms of the independent variables is low.

H5. The level of personal problems of working women in terms of the independent variables is high.

H6. The level of familial problems of working women in terms of the independent variables is high.

H7. The level of occupational problems of working women in terms of the independent variables is high.

Section II

H8. There is no significant mean difference in the attitude of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H9. There is no significant mean difference in the physical health and hygiene of working women in terms of the independent variables.
H10. There is no significant mean difference in the mental health of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H11. There is no significant mean difference in the adjustment of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H12. There is no significant mean difference in the personal problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H13. There is no significant mean difference in the familial problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H14. There is no significant mean difference in the occupational problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

Section III

H15. There is no significant correlation between attitude and personal problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H16. There is no significant correlation between physical health and hygiene and personal problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H17. There is no significant correlation between mental health and personal problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H18. There is no significant correlation between adjustment and personal problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H19. There is no significant correlation between attitude and familial problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H20. There is no significant correlation between physical health and hygiene and familial problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.
H21. There is no significant correlation between mental health and familial problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H22. There is no significant correlation between adjustment and familial problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H23. There is no significant correlation between attitude and occupational problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H24. There is no significant correlation between physical health and hygiene and occupational problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H25. There is no significant correlation between mental health and occupational problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

H26. There is no significant correlation between adjustment and occupational problems of working women in terms of the independent variables.

1.16 DELIMITATIONS

No researcher can claim that his/her study is without limitation. The present study has also its own limitations. The chief limitation of this study is that it does not actually probe into the problems of working women on the whole. It only studies the personal, familial and occupational problems which may throw light on its nature.

The investigator had taken the sample of only 713 working women from the large number of population. Moreover, different categories of profession like engineers, doctors, teachers, clerks, accountants etc. have their own specific problems wherein the present study depicts the problems of working women in common. If the investigator had included the different professions under study, it would have depicted the various dimensions of problems.
The investigator has restricted the present study to Thoothukudi city for want of time. If the investigator had taken the neighboring educational cities like Kanyakumari and Tirunelveli it would have been helpful for comparative analysis of problems of working women.

Though the factors like intelligence, thinking, aptitude etc. are related with the problems of working women, the investigator has taken up only a few variables like attitude, physical health and hygiene, mental health and adjustment for the present investigation.

In spite of all these, the investigator feels that her study might contribute to the fund of information so far gathered which would help the working women and thereby the children, the pillars of our nation.

The next chapter elaborates the review of related literature.


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35. Ritu Singh et al. (2006), “Assessment of Marital Adjustment among Couples with Respect to Women’s Educational Level and Employment
