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## Workplace Realities and Job Satisfaction of Prison Staff in Women Jail, Ludhiana

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### **Abstract**

*The present chapter explores the job satisfaction of prison staff in Women Jail, Ludhiana, with the aim of understanding their working conditions, professional challenges, and overall well-being. The primary objective is to examine the factors influencing satisfaction levels, including organizational environment, rules and regulations, workload, infrastructure, and interpersonal relations among staff members. Further objectives include assessing the impact of these factors on staff morale, efficiency, and their role in ensuring effective prison administration. The study adopts a descriptive research design to systematically analyze the perceptions and experiences of the prison personnel. Primary data was collected through an interview schedule, wherein the researcher personally interviewed all staff members working in Women Jail, Ludhiana. This comprehensive approach ensured that the views and experiences of the entire workforce were documented and analyzed. The findings reveal that while the prison staff play a crucial role in maintaining discipline, security, and rehabilitation within the jail, they often face challenges such as job-related stress, inadequate facilities, and limited opportunities for career advancement. The chapter concludes that improving job satisfaction through better working conditions, supportive management, and welfare measures is essential not only for the well-being of staff but also for the effective functioning of correctional institutions.*

**Keywords:** Administration, Jail Staff Profile, Prison, Working Conditions, Welfare,

## Introduction

An organisation is set up with the purpose of achieving certain objectives. These objectives can be achieved only when organisation is utilizing its resources in the preeminent possible way. Main central asset of any organisation is its human resource. This is possible only through effective utilization of the human resource potential. The success of the organisation depends on the quality and work effort of the personnel. Proper attention should be given to the people through recognition of their talents and development of their potential. All institutions should have employees with necessary skills and knowledge to carry out their job. Before introducing a new skill or a product, the company must educate its employees to face the risk and challenges. Hence, training and development has become one of the important functions of Human Resource Management. Personnel management deals with the administrative and record-keeping requirements relating to the full employee lifecycle of staff in an organisation. A place where individuals from different communities, religions and backgrounds come together on a common platform to work towards a predefined goal is called an organization. Every organization has set of principles and policies are mandatory for all the employees to follow. The beliefs, ideologies and practices of an organization form its culture which gives a sense of direction to the employees. The employees are the true assets of an organization. They are the ones who contribute effectively towards the successful functioning of an organization. The employees are also very important in the jail department like other organizations. The primary role of the prison staff has to be correction and rehabilitation of prisoners.

The role of the prison officer is much more than simply locking and unlocking doors. Prison officers are operational in that they facilitate a regime for people in prison. This essentially means prison officers ensure that people are unlocked from their cells to meet their basic needs, such as access to showers and exercise, for association, where people on the wing are able to socialize with others and play games such as pool or dominoes, and to be able to attend education or work. Prison officers are also responsible for maintaining security and safety of the establishment, which requires skills in assertiveness and appropriate use of power. However, just as importantly, prison officers are expected to form positive rapports with people in prison, have emotional intelligence,

communicate effectively, problem-solve, de-escalate situations, and respond to violence and self-harm calmly and professionally.

International standards have also talked about the prison staff, recruitment, their duties and responsibilities. Prison staff expected to be positive, pro-social influential figure for people in prison, to aid them in their rehabilitation. The United Nations Nelson Mandela Rules (Rule 74 and 75), which set out the minimum international standards for treatment in detention, mentioned that:

- The prison administration shall provide for the careful selection of every grade of the personnel, since it is on their integrity, humanity, professional capacity and personal suitability for the work that the proper administration of prisons depends.
- The prison administration shall constantly seek to awaken and maintain in the minds both of the personnel and of the public the conviction that this work is a social service of great importance, and to this end all appropriate means of informing the public should be used.
- To secure the foregoing ends, personnel shall be appointed on a fulltime basis as professional prison staff and have civil service status with security of tenure subject only to good conduct, efficiency and physical fitness. Salaries shall be adequate to attract and retain suitable men and women; employment benefits and conditions of service shall be favourable in view of the exacting nature of the work.
- All prison staff shall possess an adequate standard of education and shall be given the ability and means to carry out their duties in a professional manner.
- Before entering on duty, all prison staff shall be provided with training tailored to their general and specific duties, which shall be reflective of contemporary evidence-based best practice in penal sciences. Only those candidates who successfully pass the theoretical and practical tests at the end of such training shall be allowed to enter the prison service.
- The prison administration shall ensure the continuous provision of in service training courses with a view to maintaining and improving the knowledge and professional capacity of its personnel, after entering on duty and during their career.

## **Introduction**

The study of prison administration and staff satisfaction is vital to understanding the overall effectiveness of correctional institutions. In the context of Women Jail, Ludhiana, the staff members perform crucial functions ranging from security and discipline to rehabilitation and welfare of prisoners. Recognizing their central role, this study has been undertaken with the aim of exploring the job satisfaction of prison staff and the factors that influence their morale and efficiency. The objectives of the study are threefold: first, to identify the major aspects of job satisfaction among prison staff, including working conditions, rules, workload, infrastructure, and interpersonal relationships; second, to analyze the challenges and stressors faced by the personnel in carrying out their duties; and third, to evaluate the impact of these factors on their performance, motivation, and professional commitment. To achieve these objectives, the study adopts a descriptive research design based primarily on the interview schedule method. The researcher personally interviewed all staff members working in Women Jail, Ludhiana, ensuring comprehensive coverage and authentic representation of their views. This methodology enabled the collection of firsthand information regarding the experiences, expectations, and professional concerns of the personnel. Thus, the introduction lays the foundation for an in-depth analysis of the job satisfaction of prison staff, highlighting both the importance of their role in correctional settings and the need for institutional reforms to enhance their working environment and overall well-being.

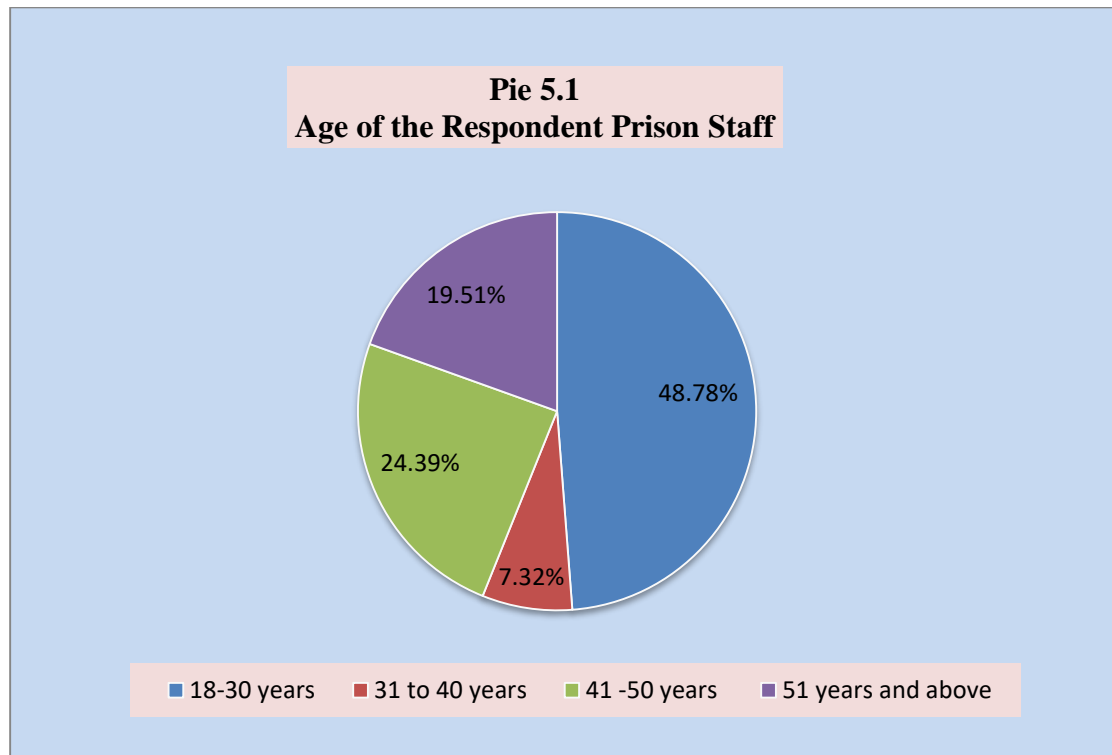
In this research study, an attempt has been made to know about the administration and jail staff of Women Jail Ludhiana from various aspects like their method of recruitment and working conditions. To collect the information, effort was made to involve all the Jail Officials of Women Jail, Ludhiana and get the above information. All the staff members of Women Jail Ludhiana, whose total number was 41, were interviewed using the interview schedule method.

## **Age Group**

The amount of time during which someone has lived is called age. In every department there are employees of different age group. Younger people can do better in many jobs and older people in many jobs. With increasing age the experience of the employee also increases

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as he has Practical Experience of the work. However, with age, the employee's ability to work also decreases. At the time of recruitment in any department, usually most of the employees are young and there is an incentive to learn something new while working in it. By the way, the age of the employee does not make much difference in any work but the work depends on the personality of the employee.

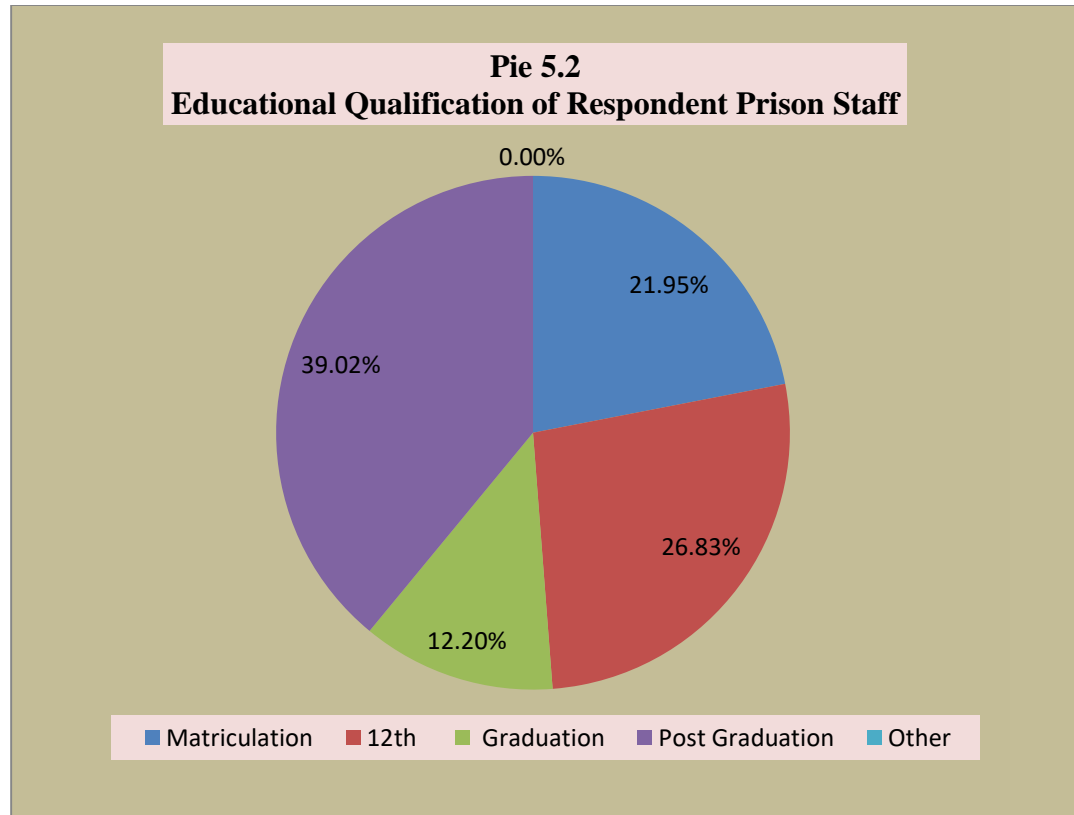


Pie 5.1 shows the age of the respondent prison staff. The study of the prison staff revealed that 48.78 percent respondent prison staff belong to 18-30 years age group and 24.39 percent belongs to age group of 41- 50 years. The age group of 51 and above, 19.51 percent respondent prison staff fall in this category while the age group of 31 years to 40 years showed that very few have been given in this grouping. About half of the Respondents from prison staff were young. The lowest number of respondents was in the age group of 31-40 years.

## Education Qualification

It is important for everyone to get education. Without education one's life is incomplete. That is why education is called the third eye of a human. Education is also important for getting

a job. An educational qualification is determined for the candidates according to the job. In today's age of technology, education is even more important. There is no fix age to get education. One can enhance their education qualification by getting education at any time.

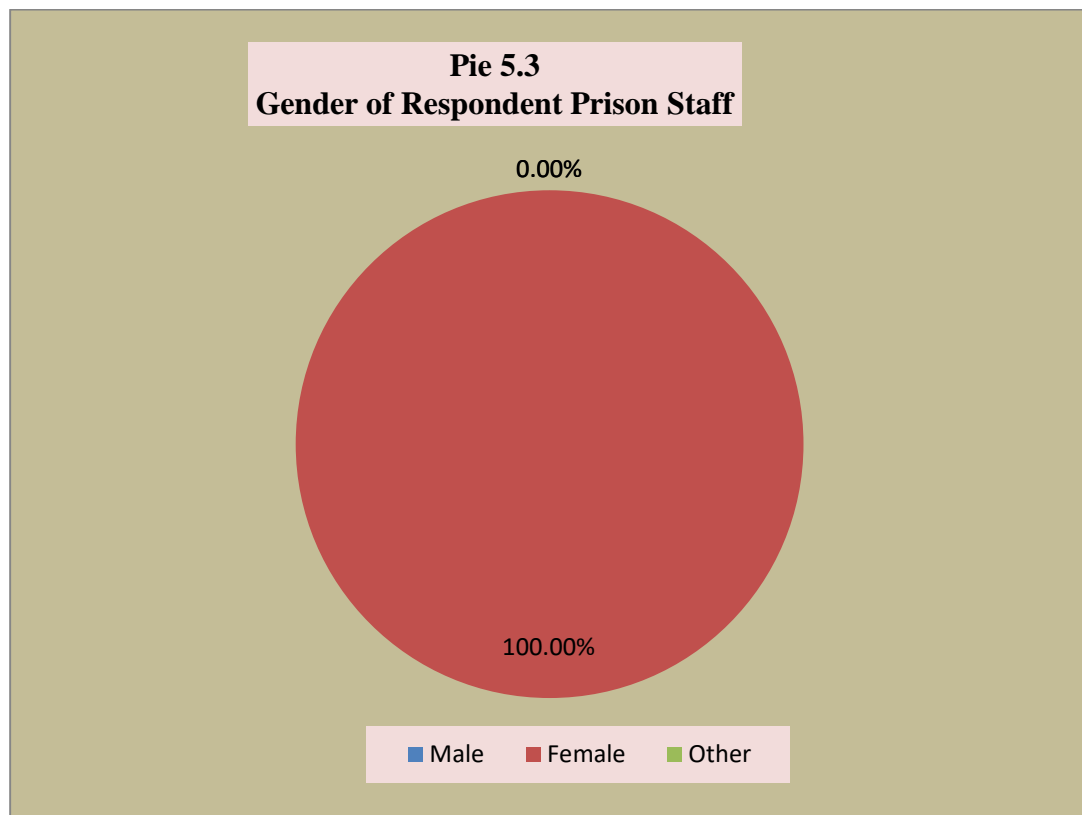


Educational qualification of respondent prison staff is shown in pie 5.2. It is observed that 39.02 percent respondent prison staff are post graduated and only 12.20 percent respondent prison staff are graduate. 26.83 percent respondent prison staff is 12<sup>th</sup> pass and 21.95 percent respondent prison staff is only 10<sup>th</sup> pass.

While talking to the respondent prison staff, it was come to light that the highest percentage was of those respondents who were studied up to Post-Graduation Level in various fields. Basic education was received by all the respondents and no respondent had studied less than 10th class. Some respondents told to Researcher that they were considering further studies.

## Gender

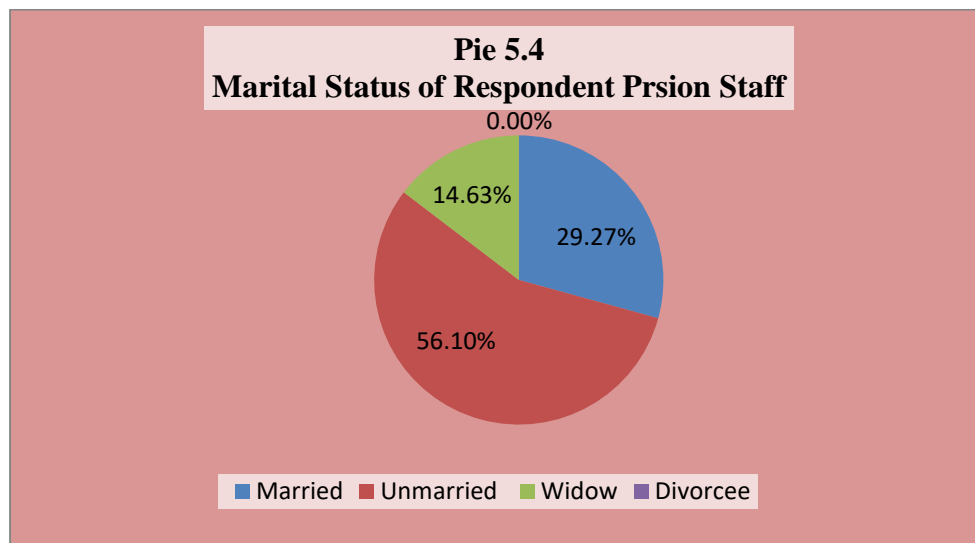
Today, men and women are working equally in every field. In the old days men used to go out to work and women used to do housework, but now it is not like that at all. In today's age women are making new achievements by working in every field and setting an example for future generations. The prison department also recruits both men and women. Prisons have both male and female prisoners, so the prison needs both male and female staff.



Pie 5.3 reveals the gender of respondent prison staff. 100 percent respondent prison staff is female and none of them male or any other category of official. The entire staff of Women Jail Ludhiana interacted by researcher was female. The reason for this was that it was the only separate prison for women, so all the staff was female.

## Marital Status

Marital status is the legally defined marital state. There are several types of marital status: single, married, widowed and divorced. Never married persons are persons who never got married in concordance with valid regulations. Married persons are those who got married before a competent body in concordance with valid regulations. Widowed persons are persons whose marriage ceased to exist by death of one of spouses or by declaring a missing spouse dead respectfully. Divorced persons are those whose marriage was terminated. Like the employees of other departments, the prison department also has employees with different types of marital status.

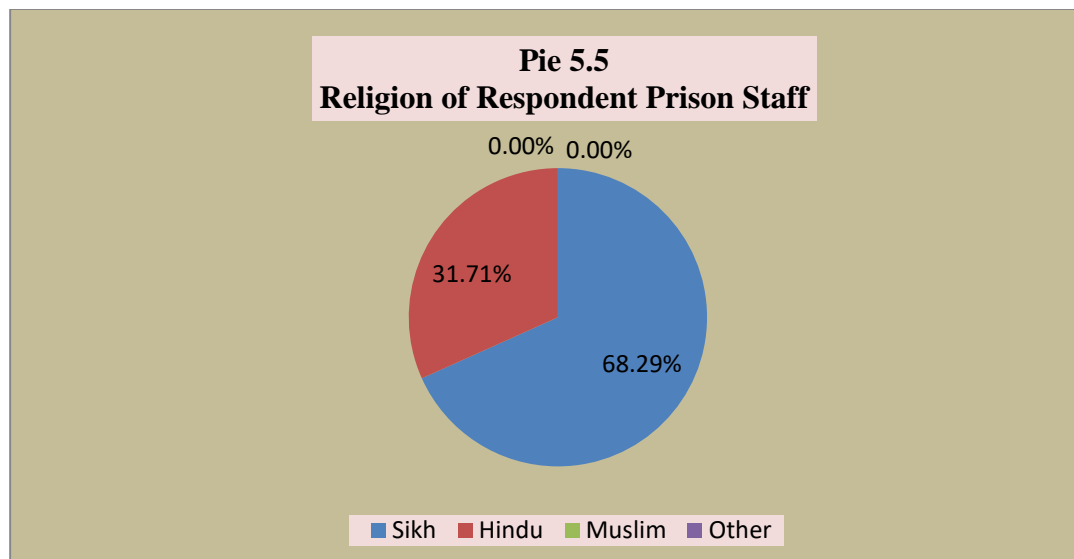


Pie 5.4 shows that marital status of respondent prison staff at Women Jail Ludhiana. More than half percent (56.10 percent) respondents are unmarried and 29.27 percent respondents are married. Only 14.63 percent respondents are widow and none of them are divorcee.

## Religion

People of many religions live in India. Everyone has the right to choose the religion of their choice. People of different religions are work together in different areas of society. If we talk about Punjab then there are more Sikhs and Hindus in Punjab. There are many Muslims in Punjab too. There are also a number of Christians.

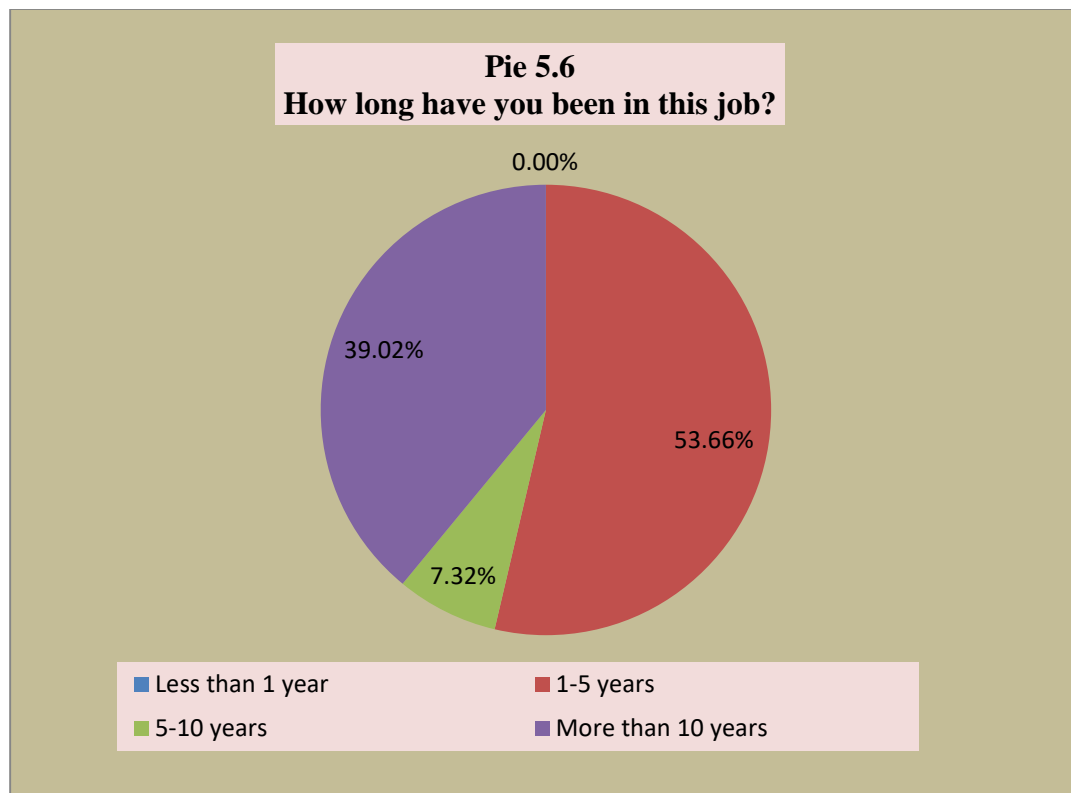




Pie 5.5 shows the religion of respondent prison staff. The majority of the respondents were Sikhs and the rest of the respondents were Hindus. None of the respondents belonged to any other religion.

### **Service Time in Prison Department, Punjab**

When a person does something to earn money, it is called a job. Everyone needs a job to run their home and raise a family. So everyone tries to get a job according to their ability. Sometimes you get your favorite job and sometimes you don't. Jobs are both government and private. Everyone prefers government jobs because of the good facilities and the good salary. It is not easy to get a job these days because competition has increased so much. The number of unemployed is higher than the number of jobs. Once a person gets a good job, he can lead a good life. There are also different types of jobs in the jail department. Prisons need people from all fields in terms of security, administration, education, health. From time to time the Jail Department recruits staff as required.



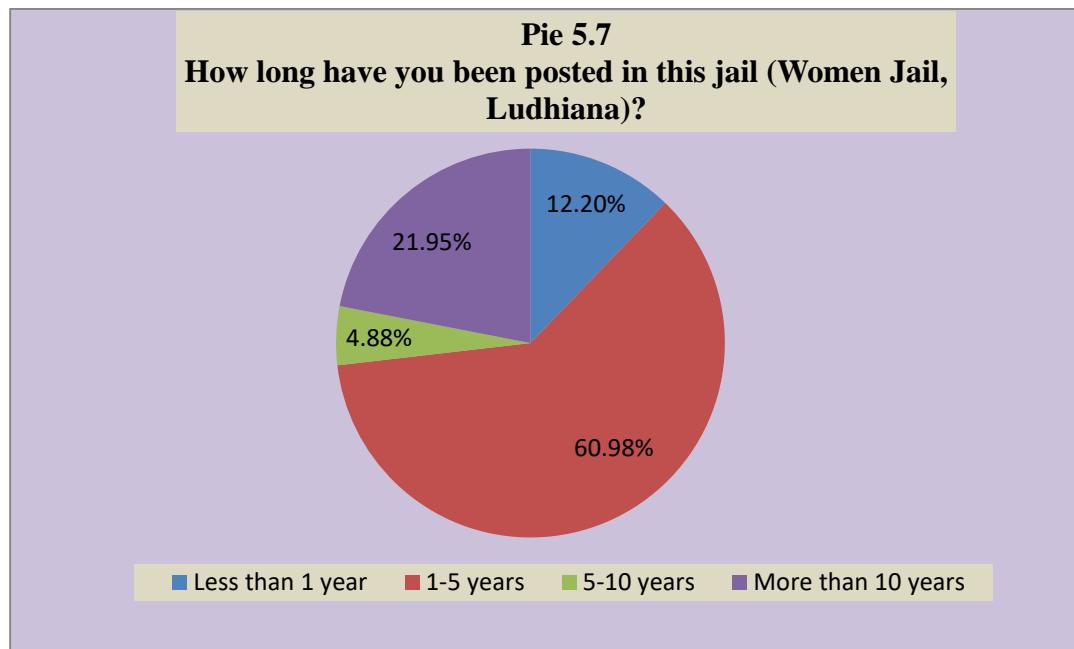
Pie 5.6 shows that 53.66 percent respondents have 1-5 years in this job and 39.02 percent respondents have more than 10 years in this job. Only 7.32 percent respondents have 5-10 years in this job and none of them have less than 1 year in this job.

From the conversation with the respondent prison staff, it came out that the highest numbers of employees are in this job from last 1-5 years. Many employees have been in this job for more than 10 years. But no employee was fresher or new to the job or under 1 year old.

### **Service time in Women jail, Ludhiana**

When a person does any job, he often has postings in different places. Each department has its own procedure regarding postings. Sometimes a person stays posted in a single place for a very long time and sometimes someone's posting is quickly relocated. Posting of staff in the Jail Department also takes place in different Jails. The advantage of long term posting in any place is that the employee becomes well acquainted with the system of working in that place and his work

efficiency is enhanced. But in a department like the Jail department, sometimes it is not considered correct due to security reasons.



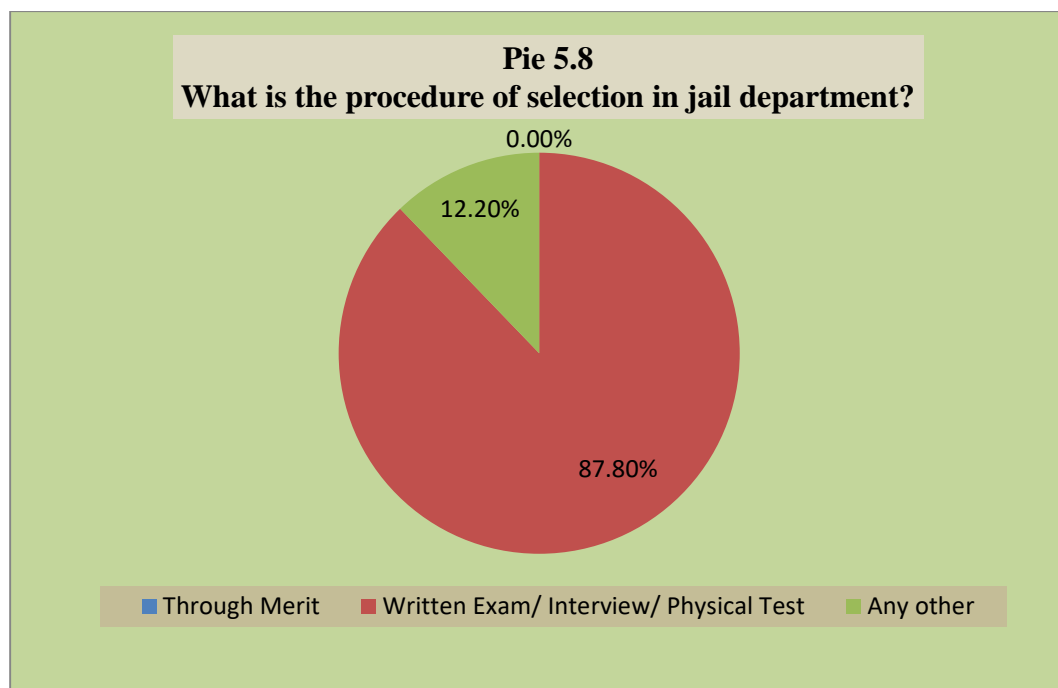
Pie 5.7 reveals that 60.98 percent respondents have posted in Women Jail, Ludhiana from 1-5 years and 21.95 percent respondents posted from more than 10 years. 12.20 percent respondents are posted from less than 1 year and only 4.88 percent respondents are posted in Women Jail, Ludhiana from 5-10 years.

Researcher's conversation with the respondent prison staff revealed that this prison also had a high number of posting staff of 1-5 years old. The reason for this was that all these employees were selected in the prison department during this time and this is where their first posting took place and they belonged to the same age group. The number of staff posted in this jail for 5-10 years was very low.

## Selection Procedure

When a department fills vacancies, an appropriate recruitment process is chosen so that everyone has an equal chance of getting a job. With the change in competition and the way of doing the job over time, the selection process in any department is becoming more and more

difficult. Generally, a Basic Eligibility is maintained for any job at the time of recruitment. A person's aptitude is tested according to the work done during the job. Written Exam Interview, Physical Test etc. are some of the common methods used by any department for recruitment of staff. The jail department also recruits staff from time to time. Nowadays, being literate is very important for everything. That is why the education of the candidates is looked at. Physical Test of Jail Staff is also taken as Physical Fitness is very important in the job of Jail Department. The Jail Department seeks to recruit candidates who are educated, physically fit and able to make decisions on Confident.



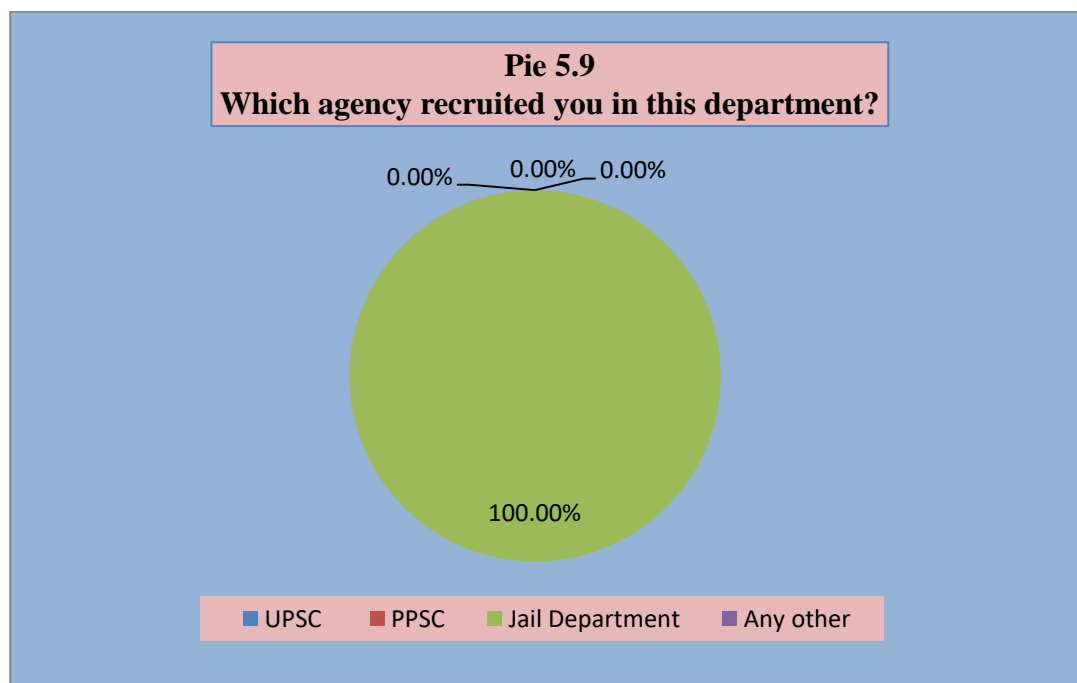
Pie 5.8 depicts the procedure of selection in jail department. 87.80 percent respondents selected through written exam/Interview/Physical Test. 12.20 percent respondents are selected through any other method. None of them is selected through merit bases.

Except few respondents, everyone else said that they were recruited after clearing Written Test, Physical Test and Interview. The remaining few respondents were recruited in the Death Case as one of their family members was a former employee of the prison department and after his death they got a job in his place. Interacting with the respondents, it was revealed that a very good procedure is followed for recruitment in the jail department so that only good and qualified

candidates can be recruited. According to the respondents, he himself had made a lot of preparations for recruitment in the Jail department.

## Recruitment Agency

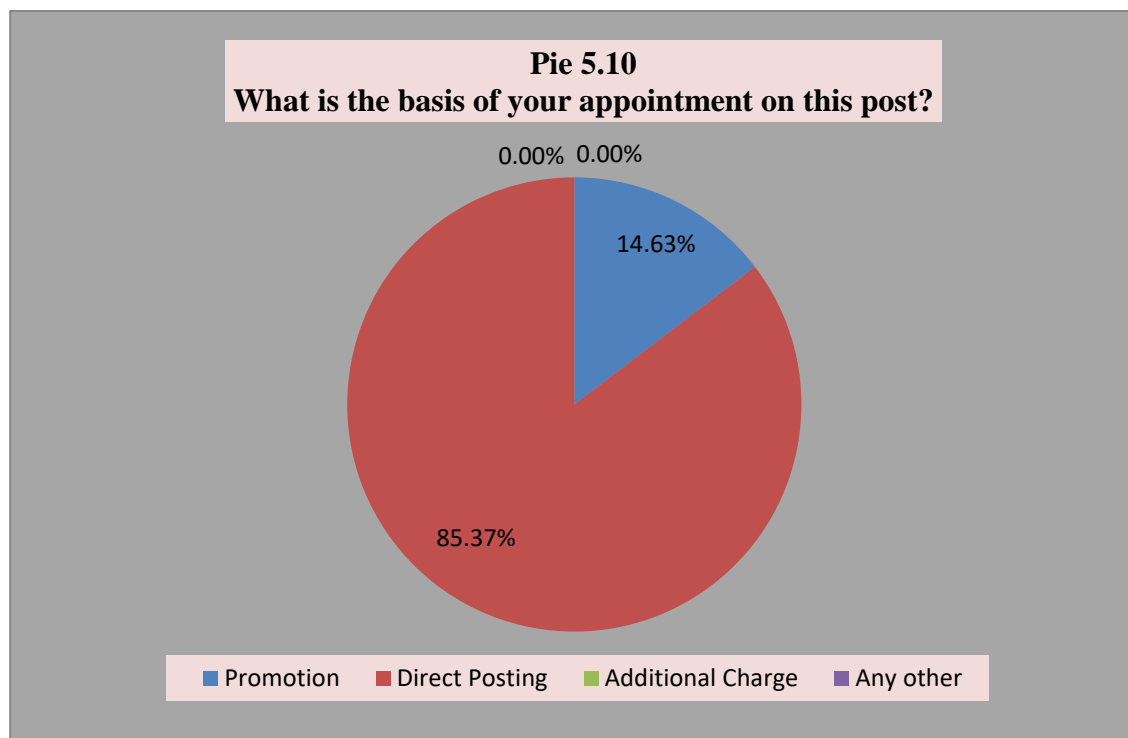
Agency which selects suitable candidates for other departments as per their requirement is called recruitment agency. Recruitment Agencies have experience in this field and it is easy for any department to find suitable candidates. There are also many departments which do not recruit their own staff from any external recruitment agency. These departments themselves conduct Advertisement, Selection Procedure, Joining of Posts.



Pie 5.9 shows the agency which recruited the Women Jail, Ludhiana's staff. All the respondent prison staff (100 percent) is recruited by Jail Department. All the respondents informed the Researcher that their selection was not done through any external recruitment agency. They said that the entire procedure of Advertisement, Test, and Interview etc. for his posts was done by the Punjab Jail Department itself. During the discussion it came to light that the topmost officers of the jail department who are IPS or PPS are appointed through external agencies, the rest of the staff is recruited by the jail department itself.

## Basis of Appointment

There may be different grounds according to the rules of the department for appointing a person to any post. Just like sometimes direct posting is done by recruiting a new person on a post, sometimes a person is appointed to a post by giving a promotion in a job, sometimes a person is given a post in addition to his current job. An additional charge is also given and all the work related to the post with that extra charge is done by that person. Each department has different Rules of Appointment on different Posts.

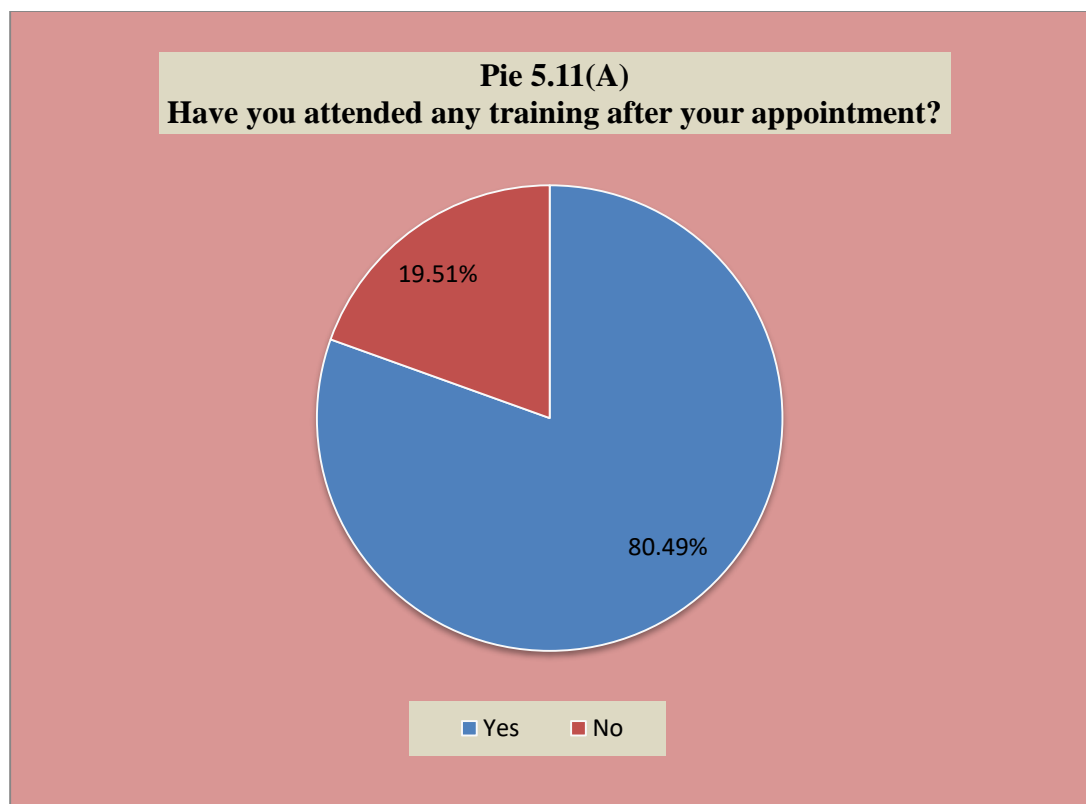


Pie 5.10 reveals that 85.37 percent respondents are appointed by direct posting and 14.63 percent respondents are appointed by promotion system.

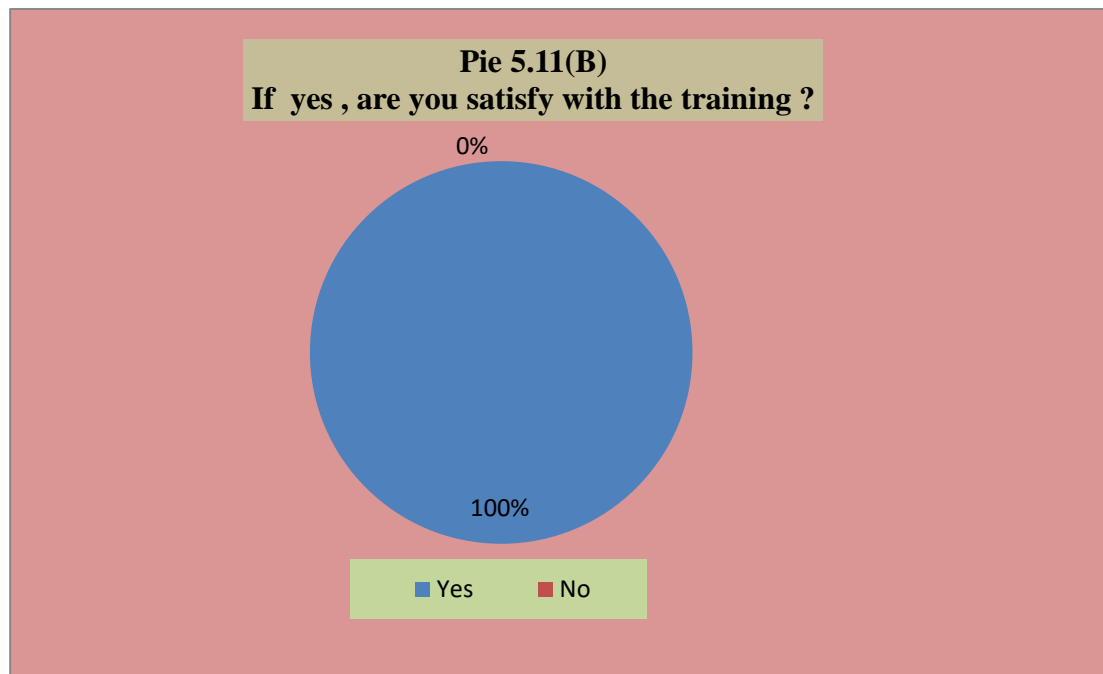
A large number of Respondents from Prison staff had direct posting on their posts. The number of respondents who were appointed to their post through promotion was less. One of the reasons for this was that the majority of respondents were recruited at the same time in the prison department and the time for their promotion had not yet come.

## Training

Training is teaching or developing in over self or others, any skills and knowledge or fitness that relate to specific useful competencies Training has specific goals of improving one's capability, capacity, productivity and performance. There are many benefits to training as it enhances the employee's ability to work and efficiency. It helps new employees learn about their duties. Training raises employee's morale. It helps employees in learning new techniques. Different methods of training are chosen according to the work to be done by each department. Training may also be provided during the employee's appointment or during his or her tenure.



Pie 5.11(A) shows that the majority of respondents are attended training after their appointment. According to a large number of respondent employees, they were attended training after appointment.



In Pie 5.11(B), opinions about the training given to the respondent employees have been taken. All respondent employees (100 percent) are satisfied with the training.

All the respondents said that they were satisfied with the training. According to them, training reveals new techniques, how to deal with any situation, physical fitness, etc. reveals

## Transfer

Move a person from one place to another during his employment is called transfer. There can be various reasons behind any transfer. The rule in many departments is that transfer has to take place after a certain period of time. Sometimes an employee is transferred to another place as per the need or importance of the work of the department. Sometimes two employees get Mutual Transfer by mutual consent. Sometimes an employee is transferred as a punishment for negligence in his duty. Like other departments, there are frequent transfers in the prison department and the basis of these transfers varies.



## **Findings of the study**

### **Working Conditions**

- Many staff members reported dissatisfaction with the overall infrastructure and physical environment of the jail, citing issues such as overcrowding, inadequate facilities, and lack of modern equipment.
- Some expressed that the long duty hours and rigid rules often created stress and fatigue.

### **Workload and Duties**

- The prison staff frequently faces excessive workloads, especially during emergencies or unexpected situations, which affects their efficiency and work–life balance.
- Staff shortage further intensifies the burden on the existing employees.

### **Job Satisfaction and Motivation**

- A considerable number of employees expressed moderate levels of job satisfaction, highlighting that while they take pride in their work, the lack of recognition and incentives lowers morale.
- Limited opportunities for career growth and training were also identified as barriers to professional development.

### **Interpersonal Relationships**

- The relationship among staff members was generally cordial, though occasional conflicts arose due to stressful working conditions.
- Some respondents indicated that their interaction with higher authorities was not always supportive, which created feelings of neglect.

### **Welfare and Support Systems**

- Staff suggested that there were insufficient welfare measures for employees, such as healthcare facilities, counseling support, and recreational activities.

- Many believed that their mental well-being was often overlooked despite the emotionally demanding nature of their work.

## **Recommendations**

### **Improving Infrastructure**

- Upgrade jail facilities and provide modern equipment to ease the workload and improve the overall working environment.

### **Addressing Staff Shortages**

- Recruit additional staff to distribute responsibilities more evenly and reduce excessive work pressure on existing employees.
- Enhancing Training and Career Growth
- Organize regular training programs to improve staff skills in handling prisoners, conflict resolution, and rehabilitation programs.
- Provide clear pathways for promotion and career advancement.

### **Recognition and Incentives**

- Introduce a system of rewards and recognition for dedicated and efficient staff members to boost morale and motivation.
- Consider financial incentives and allowances for those working in stressful conditions.

### **Strengthening Support Systems**

- Establish staff welfare programs, including mental health counseling, healthcare facilities, and stress management workshops.
- Encourage open communication between staff and higher authorities to foster a supportive environment.

## **Work–Life Balance**

- Implement policies that ensure reasonable duty hours and rest periods, minimizing burnout and fatigue.

## **Conclusion**

The present study highlights that prison staff play a pivotal role in the management, security, and rehabilitation processes within Women Jail, Ludhiana. Their satisfaction at work is directly linked to the overall functioning and effectiveness of the institution. The findings reveal that while the staff displays a strong sense of responsibility and commitment to their duties, they also face numerous challenges such as heavy workload, inadequate infrastructure, lack of proper facilities, and limited avenues for career growth. Issues of stress, job insecurity, and insufficient recognition further affect their morale. The study underscores that addressing these concerns is essential not only for the well-being of the personnel but also for ensuring a humane and efficient prison environment. Improved working conditions, provision of modern training, psychological support, timely promotions, and better communication between staff and higher authorities can significantly enhance job satisfaction levels. In conclusion, the study affirms that prison reforms must go beyond focusing solely on inmates and should also prioritize the welfare of the staff. A motivated, well-supported, and satisfied workforce is indispensable for achieving the broader goals of prison administration—security, discipline, rehabilitation, and social reintegration of prisoners.

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