

## DETAILS REGARDING PROPOSALS FOR RESEARCH STUDIES

### Topics for research

#### Major Studies

1. Problems of Ex-convicted women
2. A study on Social change among Tribal women
3. Gender stereotypes in Media - A study on the impact of TV serials and Advertisements among Adolescents
4. A study on Swadhar Grehs/Shelter homes in Kerala.

#### Minor Studies

1. A Study on the problems of working women attending night duties.
2. Status and Problems of Transgenders in Kerala.

The area of focus for each topic is given in detail. This should be used to prepare the proposal. Applications are **in hard copy only**.

**Funding** – Rs. One lakh per major study, Rs. 50,000 per minor study.

**Time frame** – Major study should be completed and report submitted to the Kerala Women's Commission within six months. Minor studies should be completed and report submitted to the Kerala Women's Commission within three months.

### Last date of receiving applications – 20-02-2018

Address to which applications are to be sent –

The Secretary

Kerala Women's Commission  
Near Lourde Church  
Pattom P.O. TVM 695004.

**Specifications** – Applicants should have at least PG in Social Sciences/other qualifications relevant to the topic. Previous research experience is a must.

#### Format of application

The application should contain the following

1. Bio data of applicant (including research experience)
2. Application expressing willingness to do research in select topic (should be dated and signed)
3. Detailed research topic containing –
  - Topic of research
  - Objectives of research
  - Research methodology
  - Sampling design
  - No of samples
  - Universe of study
  - Budget
  - Time frame

## Topics of research

### MAJOR STUDIES

#### 1. Problems of Ex – convicted women

Previous studies suggest that criminal behavior is a socially learned behavior. These behaviors can be learned from parents, family members, and the community environment. According to Maslow's theory, humans will only be motivated to do what is good when their needs are met. Many individuals being released from correctional facilities are not returning to nurturing environments. The stigma that is attached to an individual who has committed a crime remains with them forever. That attached stigma affects the ex-offenders' future by the way of employment, social systems, confidence and the overall worth one feels for themselves. Studies revealed that lack of employment; housing, community resources, correctional rehabilitation, and vocational training have the ability to challenge successful reintegration. Individuals are more likely to have a successful reentry into society if they return to a positive environment. Most of the women prisoners are expected to be homeless upon release. Finding suitable housing and having access to support is vital but rarely available. One of the first requirements for an offender who is released from prison is to obtain a job. Employment tends to be the greatest obstacle for ex- convicted women.. Ex-offenders will typically work for low wages, while acquiring job skills. Individuals, who are released into areas with job opportunities, are less likely to commit a new crime. Social support has been shown to have a great impact on success of ex-offenders. The main objective of the study is to look at the ex-offenders perceptions of needs, and challenges and then take those needs as guidance to decrease the recidivism rate. The researcher has the freedom to decide the size of sample, research design and method of study. The major areas be covered in the study are as follows;

- Circumstances leading to criminal offences
- Social stigma faced by Ex –convicted women
- Needs and challenges of Ex-convicted women
- Support from family and society
- Role of Government
- Recommendations for improvement

## 2. A study on Social change among Tribal women

Similar to all other societies of Kerala tribal society has undergone social change. But the change was not as fast as other societies because of some reasons. In Kerala most of the tribes are living in forest surrounded by hills. The difficulty in reaching into these areas would have been slowed down the speed of social change. Living mostly in the interior areas of the forest or hills of Kerala the tribal people traditionally occupies a marginal position within the mainstream of the Kerala society. The situation of social change and for that matter social development among the tribes is even more disappointing. In terms of socio-economic conditions also, their position has been quite discouraging. The women living in tribal areas of our State remain outside the purview of modern facilities. The literacy rate among tribal females is very low. Though tribal women were away from the mainstream, they were not kept away from the impact of socio-economic changes affecting the neighbourhood or society in general. And these changes have adversely affected the position of tribal women all over Kerala and they have been subjected to various forms of deprivation. She is suffering yet surviving for the sake of her children and her community. The tribal women are exploited by several ways. One of the main problems faced by them is unwed motherhood. Considering these factors Kerala Women's Commission helps the poor unwed mothers by giving financial assistance to DNA tests in paternity dispute cases. Today tribes are in a transition period. They are living in between the modern society and primitive society. This creates many problems in their life. Kerala Women's Commission wants to know the extent of social change occurred in the tribal women and how it affects them and what are the measures to be taken to assist these people.

In Kerala there are many categories of tribes. The tribes differed considerably from one another in race, language, culture and beliefs in their myths and customs. The tribal communities living in different regions in the state may be classified into seven major territorial groups taking into account their historical, ethnic and socio-cultural relations. (P.R.G.Mathur, 1977). They are Kazaragod, Wayanad, Attappady, Nilambur, Parambikulam, Idukki and Thiruvananthapuram. Therefore sample should be collected from these areas and the study should be descriptive in nature. The sample size should be not less than 400. The sample should be divided into two groups based on age (200 samples should be taken from above the age of 45 and 200 samples from below the age of 45).

The important factors should be covered under the study as follows;

1. Distribution and concentration pattern of major tribal groups in Kerala.
2. The pattern of literacy and education among the tribal women.
3. The occupational pattern among the tribal women.
4. The pattern of social change and development among tribal women as reflected through their various demographic and socio-economic characteristics in general.

### **3. Gender stereotypes in Media-A study on the impact of TV serials and Advertisements among Adolescents**

Influence of media in day to day life is increasing alarmingly. Media play a major role in the formation of attitudes. At the present time the media tend to reinforce traditional attitudes, often portraying an image of women that is degrading and humiliating, and fail to reflect the changing roles of the genders. In Kerala there are a large number of TV channels and these channels broadcast several serials. The themes of these serials are easily attracted by the women. The TV serials aimed at women audiences rarely are relevant to the lives and needs of most women. The following characteristics in the image of women projected in Malayalam serials.

- A woman's place is in the home.
- The most important and valuable asset of a woman is physical beauty.
- A woman's energies and intellectual must be directed at finding the right man and keeping them.
- Women are dependent and submissive; they are masochistic in their response to indignities, humiliations and even to physical violence inflicted on them.
- Women are their own worst enemies.

Advertising has acquired a very powerful role in the present situation. Advertisements often use the body of woman for marketing their products. The advertisement medium is very blatant and openly anti woman, treating her only as a sex symbol. Due to the impact of media, society often forgets that woman has equal rights as man and she has to be a respectable person. Among the adolescents those who are continuously watching these types of serials and advertisements the media plays a major role in developing negative or wrong concept about woman. In this context, the treatment of women in Television serials and advertisements assumes utmost significance as the values projected by it have immense effect on the self and social perception of women. The female viewer who is bombarded with television's derogatory, stereotypical images of women can feel she has very few role options available for redefining her role in the society. The objective of the Kerala Women's Commission is to take steps for improving the status of women and to enquire into unfair practices affecting them and to recommend remedial measures. So Kerala Women's Commission has grave concern about the gender stereotyping in the media and had taken the decision to include the topic in the major study. The sample should be the adolescents in Kerala and sample size should be not less than 400(200females and 200males).

Major areas to be covered as follows;

- Responses of adolescents' towards serials and advertisements
- Themes of Malayalam TV serials
- Women character roles in the television serials.
- Women in advertisements.
- The influence of media in the attitudes, self-concept, social values and social perception of adolescents.

## 4. A study on Swadhar Grehs /Shelter Homes in Kerala.

Swadhar Greh (Shelter Home/Short Stay Home) is a Scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances was launched by the Department of Women and Child Development in 2001- 02. The scheme envisions a supportive institutional framework for women victims of difficult circumstances so that they could lead their life with dignity and conviction. It envisages that shelter, food, clothing, and health as well as economic and social security are assured for such women. It also envisions that the special needs of these women are properly taken care of and under no circumstances they should be left unattended or abandoned which could lead to their exploitation and desolation.

As per the 2011 census, there are 5.6 crore widowed persons in India. Women outnumber men accounting for nearly 78% i.e. 4.36 crore of total widowed population. Many widows live life as social and economic outsiders denigrated and abandoned. Often illiterate, the widows themselves are unable to access any beneficial Government scheme or justice scheme. They are not even aware of their entitlements under the welfare schemes. Some of them are not aware of their inheritance and land rights. In this situation NALSA filed a writ petition for protection of the widows. Meanwhile various writ petitions were filed for the welfare of widows living in the shelter homes. In the combined judgment dated 11.8.2017 in WP(C) 659/2007, WP(C) 168/2112 and WP(C) 133/2012, Hon'ble Supreme Court has directed to take some immediate measures for the welfare of widows. As per the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court the Kerala Women's Commission will have to conduct a study on the existing status of widows in the shelter Homes/Swadhar Grehs in Kerala. The main objective of the study is to explore the problems confronted by widows. The study should provide a clear picture of the status of widows in these homes. The study should be descriptive in nature. The objectives should be considered as follows;

- To prepare a data base of Shelter Homes/Swadhar Grehs run by Government or NGOs providing shelter to widows.
- To visit shelter homes/Swadhar Grehs for widows and the following details should be collected through the visit.
- To prepare a data base of the widows residing therein.
- Verify the identification documents of widows.
- Examine whether the welfare schemes meant for widows are connected to them or not.
- Whether they had been denied by right of property.
- To ascertain whether any offences had been committed against widows.
- Actions taken for facilitating remarriage.
- Infrastructure facilities of Shelter Homes/Swadhar Grehs.

## **MINOR STUDIES**

### **1. A Study on the problems of working women attending night duties**

Today in Kerala women became equal participants in many respects at all levels of society and entered into all areas traditionally dominated by men. Industrialised and urban societies today have increasingly drawn women into the labour force as night shift workers. The organizations and or companies that engage in night duties are law enforcement, hospitals, emergency services, IT sector, media and more. The constitution of India assures equal wages for equal work. Therefore we cannot avoid night duties of women. But considering the physiological and biological peculiarities of women, it is very essential to provide certain safety measures and better facilities to women those who are attending night duties. Night shift is the most disruptive of all shifts in terms of physiological adjustment, sleep and well being. The physiological, emotional and biological needs of women are based on a rhythmic pattern of sleeping and awakening. For permanent night duty workers, body rhythms are constantly in a state of disruption. One of the main identifiable differences between employed women and men is – while the former is expected to perform household tasks along with the job, the latter has been given an option to perform the job activities alone. It is commonly assumed that persons will sleep after a night duty, but it is, worth noting that women need to get back and start housework, thus not only cutting or reducing sleep but postponing it too. A recent scientific study shows that women need 20 minutes more sleep than men. So night duty create many problems to women ie, physical, mental, emotional and even security problems. In Kerala most of the families are nuclear families which consist of husband, wife and children. In the case of a nuclear family, when the mother attending night duty, the care and protection of the children will be the responsibility of the father. According to the latest study conducted on POCSO Act revealed that the number of children sexually abused by father is very high. So it is in this context that Kerala Women's Commission has taken a decision to conduct a study to explore the problems faced by women attending night duties. The aim of the study is to analyze the problems – physical, mental, emotional, security problems- faced by women attending night duties. The data should be representative of the whole of Kerala and hence sample selection should be done accordingly and it should not be less than 250. Major issues to be considered as follows;

- Problems faced by women attending night duties
- Childcare management
- Pregnant and nursing mothers attending night duties
- Safety measures provided for women during night shifts.
- Married and single women attending night shift.
- Support from family
- Recommendations for improvement.

## 2. Status and Problems of Transgender in Kerala.

Kerala is the first State to establish a Policy for Transgender, in India. The policy aimed at bringing transgender to the mainstream. The policy covers all the categories of TGs, including male to female TGs, female to male TGs and intersex people. The Transgender community faces many problems such as fear, shame, social discrimination, depression, suicidal tendencies and social stigma. They are unable to live a dignified life, once their gender status is revealed. TG people face injustice at every turn: in their families and homes, in schools, at the markets and shops etc. Most of the TG students drop out before completing 10 standards because of severe harassment and negative experiences at school. Transgender are very much struggling for their day to day life activities. They are forced to live as second class citizens in their own countries. Our society often ridicules and abuses the Transgender community and in public places like railway stations, bus stands, schools, workplaces, malls, theatres, hospitals, they are sidelined and treated as untouchables. The main problem they are facing is identity crisis. Most of them are reluctant to reveal their identity. The Hon'ble Supreme Court vide Judgment dated 15th April, 2014 has recognized transgender as the third gender for the purpose of safeguarding their rights. The judgment has also directed the Centre and State Government to grant legal recognition of their identity. TGs have unique needs which are overlooked and ignored by society. This group needs more attention for mainstreaming into the society. Steps must be taken to create public awareness so that TGs feel that they are a part of society and are not treated as untouchables. The solution to their problems requires concerted efforts to mainstream them through adoption of an inclusive approach in all spheres of life.

Kerala women's commission has grave concerns about the problems faced by the transgender community and has taken decision to study them. The study should be a comprehensive analysis of the psycho-social and economic problems of transgenders and its nature should be quantitative.

The data should be the representative of the whole of Kerala and hence sample selection should be done accordingly and it should not be less than 250. The major areas should be covered as follows;

- Status of transgender
- Psycho-social problems of transgender
- Economic problems of transgender
- Welfare schemes for transgender
- NGOs for transgender
- Recommendations for improvement



## 5. A study on the functions of Kerala Women's Commission

The Kerala Women's Commission came into existence on March 14<sup>th</sup> 1996 as per the Kerala Women's Commission Act 1990. The objective of the commission is to take steps for improving the status of women and to enquire into unfair practices affecting them and to recommend remedial measures. To achieve this goal certain activities/services are being carried out by the Kerala Women's Commission.

The major activities /services provided/undertaken by the commission are;

1. The Kerala Women's Commission conducts seminars/legal workshops/public hearings/awareness camps on problems faced by women and recommend remedial measures to the Government.
2. Kerala Women's Commission conducts periodic Adalaths to hear the petitioner and to ensure speedy redressal of grievances, and also to avoid hardships to the petitioners.
3. Kerala Women's Commission gives financial assistance to conduct DNA tests in paternity dispute cases.
4. Kerala Women's Commission is running a Short Stay Home at Thiruvananthapuram as a temporary accommodation to those who are out from their houses as a result of domestic violence and also to those who are victims of rape etc.
5. Kerala Women's Commission has made a grass root level grievance redressal mechanism for women i.e. Jagratha samithi which protects women from atrocities. Kerala Women's Commission gives training to the members of Jagratha samithies.
6. As per section 16(XVI) of Kerala Women's Commission Act, the commission has to undertake research/evaluation studies so as to reduce the problems faced by women.
7. Family counseling is given to couples so as to avoid family break-ups.
8. The Kerala Women's Commission has constituted a media monitoring cell to monitor the presentation of women in visual/print media and also initiates legal steps against the violator.
9. Kerala Women's Commission is conducting pre-marital counseling in all the districts for the young men and women for avoiding marital problems.
10. Kerala Women's Commission is conducting orientation empowerment programmes (Kalalayajyothi) in the high schools and colleges throughout the state.

After implementing a scheme an evaluation is necessary for checking the effectiveness of the scheme.

It is possible to detect the defects of the scheme and can rectify these defects through an evaluation. Therefore it is decided to review the functions of the Kerala Women's Commission on the previous year. The researcher has the freedom to decide the research design and method of study. The major areas should be covered as follows;

Different types of violence against the women

- Common features of atrocities against the women
- Part played by the Kerala Women's Commission in solving the hazardous problems of women
- Petitions received by the Commission
- The role played by Kerala Women's Commission in reducing domestic violence, social violence and criminal violence in Kerala.

