

Migrated Women Workers in Unorganized Sector- Challenges and Issues in India.

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ABSTRACT

“You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women.”

By Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

The present study examines the condition and status of female workers in the unorganized sector in India. The unorganized sector comprises a massive portion of the workforce in the Indian economy, accounting for approximately 50% of the GDP. Despite this, the contributions of these workers are not widely recognized.

Women migrant workers are among the most marginalized and underprivileged groups with over 95% of India's workers being informal and employed in labor-intensive, low-paying, and highly precarious jobs with little to no social protection. The shift in the rural economy has contributed to the increased migration of women. These women are often the primary breadwinners for their families and are in high demand due to their willingness to work for low wages, leading to the feminization of labor migration. Furthermore, the advent of technology has had a contradictory impact on women, as it has led to a shift from subsistence to a market economy.

Most women working in the unorganized sector are characterized by low wages, low skills, illiteracy, lack of training, ignorance, and surplus labor, leading to an elevated level of exploitation. Women are disproportionately represented, in lower-paying and less secure jobs, have income volatility, and lack a robust social safety net. The conditions for women working in the unorganized sector are even direr when compared to those in the organized sector. Common occupations for women in this sector include construction laborers, domestic workers, garment workers, vendors, and salespeople. Thus, working in the informal economy often leaves women without protection from labor laws or access to social benefits such as pensions, health insurance, or paid sick leave.

This paper aims to bring attention to the socio-economic challenges faced by women workers in the unorganized sector and raise awareness of the

rights and policies of female migrant workers to improve their lives.

Keywords: Unorganized sector, migrated women workers.

I. INTRODUCTION

Women in India, particularly migrant women, face significant challenges and discrimination in terms of economic, social, cultural, and political factors even after 75 years of freedom. These women work in low-paying and informal sectors, such as agriculture, construction, transport, domestic work, and mining, and cannot often assert their rights and access support. Migration for these women can take various forms, including autonomous female migration, relay migration, and family migration.

Women migration in India's unorganized sector is a complex issue influenced by poverty, lack of education and skill development opportunities, and traditional gender roles. Women from rural areas migrate to urban areas in search of work and end up working in low-paying, insecure jobs in the unorganized sector, such as domestic work, construction, and garment manufacturing. These women often have limited education and skills, making it difficult to find well-paying jobs in the formal sector. Additionally, societal expectations also play a significant role in women's migration into the unorganized sector. Overall, women migrant workers in India face many challenges and are often not able to claim their rights due to a lack of representation and support.

II. LITERATURE

Sultania (1994) conducted a micro-level study in the major parts of Jaipur city, focusing on women workers who were engaged as contract laborers. The research aimed to analyze the causes of inequality experienced by these women workers and to examine its impact. The study also analyzed the characteristics, profile, and recruitment of the women workers. The findings showed that the construction industry was the main sector

employing contract labor, and the women workers in this sector faced both sexual and socio-economic exploitation. They were found to be illiterate, earning lower wages, subject to male dominance, working for 10-12 hours. Anand (1998) conducted a study of the characteristics of construction workers, primarily migrant workers, and the strategies adopted to extend services and raise awareness of their rights. The study suggested that NGOs and other organizations could play a significant role in promoting awareness and promoting the rights of these women workers through campaigns and active participation. The author also proposed that unionization and cooperatives could effectively address struggles for improved wages and working conditions. Srinivasan (2000) conducted a study to explore the conceptual issues of the unorganized sector, as well as the profile and trend of women's employment within it. He found that employment for unorganized women workers shifted towards sectors with limited representation and away from legal protection. The study also noted that non-farm employment was seen as a solution for the surplus labor in the agricultural sector, but this shift did not materialize in rural India, particularly affecting women workers.

Objectives

1. To explain distinct categories of women workers in India.
2. To identify the socio-economic background of women working in the unorganized sector, especially in the construction, agriculture, and domestic sectors.
3. To analyze the problem faced by women workers in the unorganized sector.
4. To study the wage patterns and causes of discrimination in wages of women working in the unorganized sector.
5. To find out the nature of work and working conditions of women working in the unorganized sector and suggest measures for overcoming the problems of women workers in the unorganized sector.

Analysis

1. Women workers in India are categorized into two main groups: those working in the organized sector and those working in the unorganized sector. The organized sector includes women employed in formal jobs, such as government or private sector jobs, and has access to benefits such as health insurance and pension plans. The unorganized sector includes women in informal or self-employed roles,

such as domestic work, agriculture, or construction.

2. Women working in the unorganized sector in India tend to come from lower socio-economic backgrounds and may lack access to education and other resources. They may also have limited opportunities for career advancement and may face discrimination and exploitation in the workplace.
3. Women workers in the unorganized sector in India face diversity problems, including a lack of job security, inadequate wages, poor working conditions, and a lack of social protection and benefits. They may also experience discrimination based on gender, caste, or other factors.
4. Women working in the unorganized sector in India often face discrimination in wages, with women earning less than men for the same work. This can be due to factors such as limited education and job skills, discrimination based on gender, and lack of access to resources and opportunities.
5. Women working in the unorganized sector in India often work in physically demanding and hazardous jobs with poor working conditions, such as long hours, inadequate safety measures, and lack of access to healthcare. To overcome these problems, measures such as providing education and training opportunities, increasing access to resources and support services, and implementing policies to promote gender equality in the workplace can be taken.

Issues & Challenges of Women Working in the Unorganized Sector in India

The Challenges Facing Women in the Unorganized Sector in India from an Economic Perspective:

1. **Insecure employment:** Instability in job tenure results in reduced productivity and increased turnover costs for firms.
2. **Irregular & low wages:** Irregular and low wages limit the purchasing power of workers and have a negative impact on consumer demand and economic growth.
3. **Long working hours:** Long working hours reduce the time available for education and skill development, potentially limiting future earning potential.
4. **Occupational hazards and health:** Occupational hazards and health issues increase healthcare costs and reduce worker efficiency and productivity.
5. **Lack of affordable housing:** The lack of affordable housing is a hindrance to worker

mobility and stability, and can increase commuting costs and reduce worker well-being.

6. **Limited access to childcare and healthcare:** Limited access to childcare and healthcare can decrease worker participation in the labor force and increase absenteeism.
7. **Language barriers:** Language barriers can reduce the pool of available workers and limit worker mobility, potentially reducing economic growth.
8. **Limited access to education and training:** Limited access to education and training limits the development of human capital, potentially reducing future productivity and competitiveness.
9. **Limited access to credit and financial services:** Limited access to credit and financial services limits the ability of workers to invest in their future and can reduce economic growth.
10. **Discrimination:** Discrimination based on race, ethnicity, and immigration status reduces the pool of available talent and can lead to a loss of human capital and economic growth.

Women face both social and structural barriers. When it comes to migration, the following are the barriers:

1. **Agency:** Women may face barriers to migration due to a lack of autonomy and decision-making power within their households and communities.
2. **Technology:** Women may have limited access to information and resources, such as technology, that would facilitate migration.
3. **Women and the workplace:** Women may face discrimination and lack of opportunities in the labour market, both in their countries of origin and destination.
4. **Urban planning and policy:** Women may face barriers to accessing housing and other elementary services in urban areas due to discriminatory policies and practices in urban planning and development.

III. SUGGESTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The dignity of Work for Women working in the unorganized sector
2. Decent Working Conditions for the Women working in the unorganized sector.
3. Social security like food, nutrition, health, employment, income, life and accident, and old age security.

4. Incorporation for the Unorganized Women Workers for Collective bargaining.
5. Promoting flexible work arrangements and parental leave policies to accommodate the need of working mothers.
6. Challenging and changing societal attitudes toward women in the workforce through awareness campaigns and education
7. Encouraging and promoting gender diversity and inclusion in the workplace through affirmative action and mentorship programs
8. Providing access to financial services and resources to help women start and grow their own businesses.
9. Creating and implementing policies that address the specific challenges and barriers faced by women in the workforce, such as discrimination and harassment.

IV. CONCLUSION

Working and living conditions are inseparable for women working in the unorganized sector, where poor infrastructure and lack of elementary services result in poor working Conditions. Despite these challenges, there have been efforts to improve the working conditions and rights of women in the unorganized sector. The government has implemented policies and programs to promote women's empowerment and provide skill development opportunities. An integrated approach involving government, management, labor unions, local bodies, voluntary organizations, and women's organizations is needed for the proper implementation of these policies and the overall development of women in the unorganized sector. NGOs and civil society organizations also play a role in improving the status of women in the unorganized sector by providing education, health, and legal services, as well as advocating for policies that protect their rights and improve their working conditions.

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