ABSTRACT

The unorganized women workers are living below the minimum accepted standards without adequate facilities and having very lower income that did not meet their daily needs of life. Unorganised women workers including home-based works like rolling papad and beedis, self-employment programs like selling vegetables, employment in household enterprises and small units, agricultural workers, labour on construction sites, domestic work, handicrafts, khadi and village industries, handloom weaving and sericulture etc. The more women workers were employed mainly in the field of textile sector as sales women and comparatively more opportunities are there. They worked hard in shops to make their life better and reach their children in quality education and healthy food without acquiring any special skill and training. The study focused on the job satisfaction of sales women and the data were collected from 85 respondents and also from various books, reports, journals and websites. This is revealed that most of the women were satisfied with the facilities at work place given by the employer like special refreshment room for the women staff and staying or hostel facility etc but there is no time for refreshment because of continuous working hours without shifting and seasonal workload.

Keywords: Unorganised; Sales Women; Job Satisfaction; Workload

INTRODUCTION

The Indian constitution is one of the most progressive in the world and guarantees equal rights for men and women. Despite the advances women have still given second priority almost everywhere especially in unorganised sector in terms of level and quality of employment compared to males. Even women workers continue to labour because of many severe problems like Poverty, lack of access to education and inadequate health facilities etc. They are made to work for long hours and wages paid to them are not according to their work. In Kerala, unorganised women workers constitute mainly in the field of textile sector as sales women. They worked hard in shops to make their life better and reach their children in quality education and healthy food without acquiring any special skill and training.

Unorganised Sector: An Overview

The term unorganised is often used in the Indian context to refer to the vast numbers of women engaged in different forms of employment including home-based works like rolling papad and beedis, self-employment programs like selling vegetables, employment in household enterprises and small units, agricultural workers, labour on construction sites, domestic work, handicrafts, khadi and village industries, handloom weaving and sericulture etc. The central statistical organization (CSO) defined unorganised or informal sector consisting of enterprises that producing for the market do not have 20 employees without power and 10 employees with power. The workers of these enterprises are not registered under any legal stipulation like the Industrial Disputes Act of 1948 etc.
The National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS) set by the Govt of India in September 2004 defined the unorganized sector as the unorganized sector consists of all unincorporated private enterprises owned by individuals or households engaged in the sale and production of goods and services operated on a proprietary or partnership basis and with less than ten total workers.

Nature of Informal sector:

- Ease of entry
- Autonomy and Flexibility
- Small scale of operations
- Family ownership of enterprises
- Labour intensive and Adaptive technology
- Lack of support and recognition from the Govt
- Competitive and unregulated product market
- Unprotected Labour Market
- Unreported income/ Tax Evasion
- Legal or Illegal

Employment in the Unorganized Sector

According to NCEUS, unorganized workers consists of those working in the unorganized enterprises or households excluding regular workers with social security benefits and the workers in the formal sector without any employment social security benefits provided the employees. A number of Acts such as the Workmen’s Compensation Act (1923), the Industrial Disputes Act (1947), the Employees State Insurance Act (1948), the Minimum Wages Act (1948), the Maternity Benefit Act (1961), the Contract Labour Act (1970), the Payment of Gratuity Act (1972), the Building and Construction Workers Act (1996) etc. are there to the organized workers to attain different kinds of social security and welfare benefits. Though it has been argued that the above Acts are directly and indirectly applicable to the workers in the unorganized sector also but it is not implemented properly in the case of unorganized workers.

The major Characteristics/ Problems of the unorganized workers:

- The unorganized labour is vast in terms of its number range and therefore they are universal throughout India.
- As the unorganized sector suffers from cycles of excessive seasonality of employment, majority of the unorganized workers does not have steady avenues of employment. Even those who appear to be visibly employed are not gainfully and substantially employed, indicating the existence of disguised unemployment.
- The workplace is scattered and fragmented.
- There is no recognized employer – employee relationship
- In rural areas, the unorganized labour force is highly stratified on caste and community considerations. In urban areas while such considerations are much less, it cannot be said that it is altogether absent as the bulk of the unorganized workers in urban areas are basically migrant workers from rural areas.
Workers in the unorganized sector are usually subject to indebtedness and burden as their inadequate income cannot meet with their livelihood needs.

The unorganized workers are subject to exploitation significantly by the rest of the society. They receive poor working conditions especially wages much below that in the formal sector even for closely comparable jobs where the same labour productivity.

Primitive production technologies are uncontrolled in the unorganized sector and they do not permit or encourage the workmen to absorb and learn higher technologies and better production relations. Large scale ignorance and illiteracy and limited exposure to the outside world are also responsible for such poor absorption.

The unorganized workers do not receive sufficient attention from the trade unions.

Inadequate and ineffective labour laws and standards relating to the unorganized sector.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The unorganized women workers are living below the minimum accepted standards without adequate shelter and toilet facilities. The low earning of these women cannot meet with their daily needs. They do marry, bear children, and get old but under these phases of life, they live the same life. They live under unhygienic environment which results dangerous diseases. They work more than men as they have to play a dual role working both in and outside the home. No doubt, there are some laws to protect women and prevent exploitation like the Interstate Migrant Workmen Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service Act 1979, The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 1976 and Maternity Benefit Act 1961 etc. but these laws are not practically and strictly implemented. Many women workers are there in the field of textiles as sales women with or without get support. So this study mainly focused on the problems of sales women in the textile shops they were poor and with lower education by understanding their working conditions and job satisfaction and also to find out whether they were satisfied or not.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dr. Vandana Dave (2012) made an attempt to understand the socioeconomic condition of women laborers, nature of their work, their working conditions, wage pattern, wage discrimination and other difficulties faced by them at their work place. It was carried out with 350 respondents including women construction workers, agriculture labourers and domestic helpers working in the unorganized sector. The results showed that majority of the migrant women were engaged in the construction industry and were only employed in unskilled and low paying jobs as coolies, laborers and helpers and women were exploited to a greater degree as they were paid less compared to men for similar nature of work and hours spent on work. The conditions of work in the unorganized sector were unsatisfactory and the problems confronted by them were acute. And that their illiteracy, poverty and indebtedness forced them to work for lower wages and under unjust conditions.

Anthony P. D’souza (2013) focused the status and contribution of unorganized sector focused more on the challenges and problems faced by the youth in selecting job as self-employment. It is found that larger number of workers was getting their livelihood from this sector and entrepreneur plays a vital role in bringing up unorganized sector at the better position in the country.

Vasudev and Romica (2012) conducted a study amongst working women of the organized and unorganised sector for understand their status within the family by looking at their involvement in key decision making areas including distribution of household duties and money related decisions.

Usha P.E, bring out the consequences and determinants of women’s work in the unorganized sector. It is revealed that women in the textile sales sector are working with very lower wages than the minimum wage fixed. They are not getting any service benefits such as increment, leave, pension, P.F and insurance. They are all coming from the lower class family and are exploited in many ways.
OBJECTIVES

1. To highlight the unorganised sector in the context of Kerala.
2. To understand the women problems in the unorganised sector.
3. To specify the problems of sales women in the textile shops and their job satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY USED FOR THE STUDY

Textile industry is one of the main livelihoods of the poor and uneducated women. Women workers in the textile industry as sales women in the malappuram and manjeri town area were the respondents of this study. The primary data were collected from 85 respondents and also from various books, reports, journals and websites.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This is clear from the study that the women engaged in job as sales women is comparatively higher than the other works like construction, contract work etc. because of easy accessibility, less hard work and also no need for particular skill. But compare to men women also face some sort of inequality in wages. This revealed that most of the women were satisfied with the facilities at work place given by the employer like special refreshment room for the women staff and staying or hostel facility etc but there is no time for refreshment because of continuous working hours without shifting the job. Respondents also said that they had more work load at season like Onam, Bakrid, Christmas etc and less breaking time at that time. The main points of the study were noted the below table.

Table 1. Problems of Sales Women & their responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>HS No:</th>
<th>S %</th>
<th>NO No:</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>D No:</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>HD No:</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>About Wages</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities at workplace</td>
<td>8ush</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Hours</td>
<td>4ush</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic needs</td>
<td>13ush</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working conditions at season</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break time including lunch &amp; prayer</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: HS – Highly Satisfied, S – Satisfied, NO – No Opinion, D – Dissatisfied, HD – Highly Dissatisfied

Chart 1. Opinion of Sales Women
Inference: It is clear from the study that the 75% of the workers were highly dissatisfied on the seasonal workload. Some of the employers ensure the fulfillment of basic needs of their employees like staying facility, sanitation etc. for their wellbeing and security, more employees also show positive responses towards it i.e. 41%. In contrast, sales women faced some problems like seasonal work load, low wages compared to men, less break time and continuous working hours. So the poor women consider it has their livelihood and still continue with the job just like an addition to the family income for better life.

CONCLUSION

Women workers have to perform dual role of both outside employment with or without violent working conditions and also manage their home. They are also having same productivity and efficiency like men even then they faced discrimination in wages and poor working conditions and insecurity. Both the central and state governments have formulated certain specific schemes to support unorganized workers but which fail in meeting the real needs and requirements of the unorganized labour force. This study deals with the problems and satisfaction level of sales women in the textile shops and found that their working conditions and wage patterns were comparatively higher than other unorganised work like contract, agriculture, self employed, household units, construction field etc. Engagement of women in this field was high because of less hard work, no skill and easy accessibility even some sort of inequality is there when compared to men. This revealed that most of the women were satisfied with the facilities at work place and showed dissatisfaction in continuous working hours and work load at season like Onam, Bakrid, and Christmas etc.

REFERENCE

8. http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/9247/1/
13. www.google.co.in
14. www.wscpedia.org