

Economic and Working Conditions of Women Workers in Unorganised Sectors with Special Reference to Tirunelveli District



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ABSTRACT:

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

- Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

All over the world, the female workers are mostly found at the bottom of three hierarchies of class, gender and ethnicity or caste. The interaction of class exploitation, patriarchal domination, ethnic oppression and discrimination constitutes the core of their chronic disadvantages. the purpose of this study was to identify and highlight the economic and working conditions of women workers in unorganised sectors with special reference to Tirunelveli district. the aim of the study is to find out the economic conditions of women workers in unorganised sectors namely, domestic workers, construction workers and beedi workers in Tirunelveli district, to study the problems encountered and job satisfaction level of women workers in the unorganised sectors namely, domestic workers, construction workers and beedi workers in Tirunelveli district, to suggest appropriate policies and strategies for improving the economic and working conditions of women workers in these unorganised sectors in Tirunelveli district. the study based on primary and secondary data. in this study sample size of 441 workers was selected with the help of simple random sampling technique is used and Regression, ANOVA and Garret Ranking technique used for analysis of the study. The paper includes Marginal Propensity to Consume (MPC) and Problem faced by unorganised workers namely, domestic, construction and beedi workers in Tirunelveli district, government policy measures and suggestion for improvement of the unorganised women workers in Tirunelveli district. This study concludes that Government of India and the Government of Tamilnadu to wipe out the tears of women workers in unorganised sector namely, domestic, construction and beedi workers by developing and implementing various suggestions and recommendation in Tirunelveli District.

Keywords: Unorganised Workers, Domestic Workers, Construction, Workers Beedi Workers, Marginal Propensity to Consume, Problems, Policy.

Introduction

Women constitute the largest segment of India's unorganised workforce. According to National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER), almost 97 per cent female workers are involved in the unorganised or informal sector. They are from the poorest rural households and very often from scheduled, backward or tribal castes¹. Organized sector workers are distinguished by regular salaried jobs with well-defined terms and conditions of employment, clear-cut rights and obligations and fairly comprehensive social security protection. The unorganized sector, on the other hand, has no such clear-cut employer-employee relationships and lacks most forms of social protection. Having no fixed employer, these workers are casual, contractual, migrant, home based, own-account workers who attempt to earn a living from whatever meager assets and skills they possess².

National Commission on Labour (1966-69) has defined unorganized labour as those who have not been able to organize themselves in pursuit of common objectives on account of constraints like casual nature of employment, ignorance and illiteracy, small and scattered size of establishments and position of power enjoyed by employers because of nature of industry.

I. Statement of the Problem

The unorganized / informal sector is widely prevalent in developing countries. It is characterized by low productivity, low and unstable market / demand, low quality output, localized inputs and low literate / illiterate manual labour use etc.,. The unorganized / informal sector is not regulated by any state legislation nor is it using modern sophisticated technology. The unorganized sector units do not provide any social security benefits and fair

¹ Nath, Anna, (2009), 'Health Services Missing for Women Workers in India', One World South Asia, October.

² The Unorganized Workers Social Security Act, 2008, Social Change Vol. 39, No. 1, March 2009 pg. 110-120.

wages to their workers. The owners of the informal sector enterprises being individuals who are master craftsmen / merchants / contractors invest their personal capital / savings which are small. The unorganized sector units are home based, mostly manual and traditional.

II. Objective of the Study

- ❖ To study the economic conditions of women workers in unorganised sectors namely, Domestic workers, Construction workers and Beedi workers in Tirunelveli District.
- ❖ To study the problems encountered and job satisfaction level of women workers in the unorganised sectors namely, Domestic workers, Construction workers and Beedi workers in Tirunelveli District.
- ❖ To suggest appropriate policies and strategies for improving the economic and working conditions of women workers in these unorganised sectors in Tirunelveli District.

III. Hypotheses of the Study

- ❖ The Marginal Propensity to Consume (MPC) is comparatively high for overall women unorganised workers in the study area.

IV. Sampling Design

Tirunelveli District comprises of three revenue divisions, eleven taluks and nineteen development blocks. Multi-stage stratified convenient and purposive sampling techniques has been adopted for identifying Tirunelveli District as the universe, the block as the stratum, the village as the primary unit and domestic workers, construction workers and beedi workers as the ultimate unit.

The researcher has adopted convenient sampling method for identifying the Tirunelveli District out of thirty two district and purposive sampling method for identifying six taluks (two taluks for each category) out of eleven taluks. The taluks were identified with highest number of workers and lowest number of workers with each category (six taluks). Then one per cent of workers, from each category are identified, as sample respondents and it comes about 441 in total. Then the researcher adopted simple random sampling method for identify the sample workers from each categories. There are six categories, one per cent of sample workers are taken from each category for the study. So the total sample size of the study is 441 as given in the table1.

Table 1 Names of Taluks and Sampling Selected from Domestic Workers, Construction Workers and Beedi Workers in Tirunelveli District

Sl. No	Level	Taluk	No. of Registered workers	Size of Sample
Domestic Workers				
1.	Low No. of Registered Workers	Nanguneri	623	6
2.	High No. of Registered Workers	Palayamkottai	3732	37
Women Construction Workers				
3.	Low No. of Registered Workers	Shencottai	1064	11
4.	High No. of Registered Workers	Thenkasi	5867	59
Women Beedi Workers				
5.	Low No. of Registered Workers	Radhapuram	5044	50
6.	High No. of Registered Workers	Alangulam	27832	278
Total Size of Sample				441

Source: District Labour Office, Tirunelveli, 2018 and primary data

V. Review of Literature

Thilaka (2018)³ conducted a study on socio economic conditions of the women domestic workers at tiruchirapalli town. The study focused on women domestic workers. The objectives of this study was to know the socio economic and working conditions of domestic workers, problem of women domestic workers. Used the non probability sampling and adopted convenient sampling method. Data was collected from 50 women workers from four

³ Thilaka S (2018), "A Study on Socio Economic Conditions of the Women Domestic Workers at Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu" IOSR journal of Humanities and Social Science, Vol.23, Issue 6, June, Pp. 01-10.

division of tiruchirapalli district of palakkarai, puthur, wriyur and main guard gate. In this study more than two third of the respondents were coming from village to this town for doing domestic work. The respondents opined that their level of personal social problem (44%), family problem (32%) and occupational problem (36%).

Mujam Vinod Kumar Et.al., (2018)⁴ in their article, “An Empirical Study on Socio Economic Conditions and Problems of Women Workers in Construction Sector Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh”. The present study is under taken to know the socio economic conditions and problems of unorganised women labours in construction sector, Amaravati. For the purpose of the study, convenience random sampling method is adopted to carry out the study by the researcher. Design of this study is the survey and place in the area of descriptive research. The statistical populations of research are composed of 150 women construction workers in Amaravati. After sample selection, was use women workers problems questionnaire that their validity simple percentage. A questionnaire is used for present study to know the opinions of workers socio economic conditions and problems. The results of the study reveal that majority of workers are facing wage discrimination, gender discrimination, sexual harassment, lower wages, health hazards, and safety issues. This study attempts to estimate the economic burden of women labour.

Monica Munjial Singh Et.al., (2018)⁵ in their study revealed on, “Socio-economic, Health and Working Conditions of Child Beedi Rollers in Beedi Industry”. The beedi rolling function is generally done by women and child labourers who have no other means of financial earning. Child labourers are weak segments of Indian unorganized labour force. This study has been done in Solapur city of Maharashtra state in India. The main objective of the present study is to present a current scenario of health, socio-economic and working conditions of child beedi rollers in beedi manufacturing factories of Solapur city. This city is an important and famous for power loom industry and beedi industry also. Through the study,

⁴ Munjam Vinod Kumar¹, Murali Krishna Bandlamudi and Raju P.D. (2018), “An Empirical Study on Socio Economic Conditions and Problems of Women Workers in Construction Sector Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh State”, International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention, Vol.7, Issue.6, June, Pp.69-73.

⁵ Monica Munjial Singh, Mohammad Amiri and Sherry Sabbarwal (2018), “Socio-economic, Health and Working Conditions of Child Beedi Rollers in Beedi Industry”, Journal of Social Science Studies, Vol.5, Issue 1, Pp.239-247.

an attempt has been made to highlight the health problems which are faced by child beedi rollers. This study also focuses on the factors which force children to work in beedi manufacturing industry and assesses literacy level of the child beedi rollers. The results of the study show that socio-economic condition of majority of the selected child beedi rollers is very poor and majority of them are facing various diseases due to constant exposure to tobacco dust and unhygienic working conditions at work place. Most of them have not completed their primary education. Selection of Sample 118 child beedi rollers (both male and female) have been randomly selected from various beedi manufacturing factories in purposively selected Solapur city of Maharashtra for this study. All the selected child labourers are in the age group of 9 years to 14 years. Research methodology consists of field survey by using purposive sampling method. It is found that, parents of selected child beedi rollers are also not aware about the legislation of child labour. It is suggested that, there should be a frequent investigation by the law enforcement agencies. There should be active intervention by government agencies and NGO's, with the aim of development and rehabilitation of child beedi rollers. There should be assurance by the government, that every child beedi roller will get proper education. There should be active role of NGO's in implementing various welfare programmes for child beedi rollers and they should undertake small projects to improve the overall quality of life of the child beedi rollers.

VI. Result and Discussion

The Economic Conditions wise details of the respondents and Problems, job satisfaction level of unorganised workers like domestic, construction and beedi workers are given the following tables. Regression and ANOVA used for estimated Marginal Propensity to Consume (MPC) and Garrett ranking techniques are used for ranking the problems faced unorganised workers in work place.

i. Economic Conditions

The following table explains the Income, Expenditure, savings and debt wise classification of Unorganised Women Workers namely, Domestic, Construction and Beedi Workers in Tirunelveli District.

Table 2 Economic Conditions Wise details of the Respondents

S.No	Factors	Particulars	Types of Workers			
			Domestic Workers	Construction Workers	Beedi Workers	Overall
1.	Income	Below 3000	13 (30.23)	15 (21.42)	68 (20.73)	96 (21.76)
		3001-6000	14 (32.55)	31 (44.28)	139 (42.37)	184 (41.72)
		6001-9000	13 (30.23)	16 (22.85)	103 (31.40)	132 (29.93)
		Above 9001	3 (6.97)	8 (11.42)	18 (5.48)	29 (6.57)
2.	Expenditure	Below 3000	28 (65.11)	39 (55.71)	58 (17.68)	125 (28.34)
		3001-6000	8 (18.60)	13 (18.57)	159 (48.47)	180 (40.81)
		6001-9000	5 (11.62)	11 (15.71)	73 (22.25)	89 (20.18)
		Above 9001	2 (4.65)	7 (10.00)	38 (11.58)	47 (10.65)
3.	Savings	Below 3000	5 (11.62)	10 (14.28)	34(10.36)	49 (11.11)
		3001-6000	2 (4.65)	6 (8.57)	20 (6.09)	28 (6.34)
		6001-9000	-	-	14 (4.26)	14(3.17)
		Above 9001	-	-	-	-
		No Savings	36 (83.73)	54 (77.15)	260 (79.26)	350 (79.38)
4.	Debt	Below 50,000	18 (41.86)	24 (34.28)	167 (50.91)	209 (47.39)
		50,001 – 1,00,000	8 (18.60)	13 (18.57)	64 (19.51)	85 (19.27)
		1,00,001 -1,50,000	-	1 (1.42)	37 (11.28)	38 (8.61)
		1,50,001 – 2,00,000	-	5 (7.14)	18 (5.48)	23 (5.21)
		Above 2,00,001	-	12 (17.14)	-	12 (2.72)
		No Debt	17 (39.53)	15 (21.42)	42 (12.80)	74 16.78)

Sources: Primary data

From this study revealed that, out of a total 441 sample respondents, about 32.55 per cent, 44.28 per cent and 42.37 per cent of domestic, construction and beedi workers, earned a monthly income range from Rs. 3001-6000 per month after entering this work. Among these groups, about 41.72 per cent of the respondents are earning a monthly income ranges between Rs. 3001-6000 per month.

From this study evident that, out of a total 441 sample respondents, consumption expenditure average with the majority of about 65.11 per cent and 55.71 per cent of domestic and construction workers. Monthly consumption expenditures are ranges between below Rs.3000 per month. About 48.47 per cent of beedi workers consumption expenditures ranges between 3001-6000 per month. Among all workers, about 40.81 per cent of the respondent's consumption expenditure ranges between Rs.3001-6000 per month.

From this study found that, out of a total 441 sample respondents, about 11.62 per cent, 14.28 per cent and 10.36 per cent of the domestic, construction and beedi workers are having the savings level below Rs.3000 per month. About 83.73 per cent, 77.15 per cent and 79.26 per cent of the domestic, construction and beedi workers respectively do not have any saving habit. Out of a total 441 sample respondents, about 11.11 percent of them have the saving habit level below Rs.3000 and about 79.38 per cent of them do not have any saving habits.

From this study clear that, out of a total 441 sample respondents, about 41.86 per cent, 34.28 per cent and 50.91 per cent of the domestic, construction and beedi workers respectively are under the debt ranges below Rs.50000. About 39.53 per cent, 21.42 per cent and 12.80 per cent of the domestic, construction and beedi workers respectively don't have any debts. Overall about 47.39 per cent of the sample respondents are under the debt ranges below Rs.50000 and 16.78 per cent of the registered unorganised workers don't have any debts.

ii. Consumption Function

Linear consumption function were fitted by taking the per capita consumption expenditure of the households as the dependents variables and the per capita income of the households as independents variable to study the qualitative relationship between the consumption and income in the women workers in unorganised sectors namely, domestic workers, construction workers and beedi workers households. The Marginal Propensity to Consume (MPC) and The Marginal Propensity to Savings (MPS) are derived from consumption functions for the workers households.

Estimated Consumption Function for the Overall Unorganised Women Workers

The results of the estimated consumption for the overall unorganised women workers are presented Table 3.

Table 3 – Analysis of Estimated Linear Consumption Function for the Overall Unorganised Women Workers
Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.901 ^a	.813	.812	.38862

a- Predictors: (Constant), PCI.

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	27287.659	1	27288	49.884	.000 ^a
Residual	240145.292	439	547.03		
Total	267432.951	440			

a- Predictors: (Constant), PCI.

b- Dependent Variable: PCE.

Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
Intercept (β_0)	2912.316	114.21		25.500	.000
PCI (β_1)	0.884	0.102	0.901	6.667	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PCE.

The co-efficient of multiple determinants (R^2) was significant with a value of 0.813, indicating that the explanatory variable per capita household income included in the function

could explain 81 per cent of the variation in the annual per capita expenditure in the women unorganised households.

The intercept (b_0) was positive and significant with a value of 2,912.316, indicating that the autonomous consumption in the women unorganised households was Rs.2,912.32. This implied that even without any income for the individual in the household the minimum expenditure incurred per person was Rs.2,912.32.

The co-efficient of annual per capita income variable was positive and statistically significant with a value of 0.894. As the function is linear, the co-efficient of per capita income variable straight away indicate the Marginal Propensity to Consume (MPC). Marginal Propensity to Consume indicates the proportion of income that is allocated for consumption and indicates indirectly the level of poverty that exists in the households. From the analysis it could be inferred that with every increase in the annual per capita income from the existing mean level by one rupee, the annual per capita consumption would increase marginally by 0.894 rupees in the women unorganised households.

Marginal Propensity to Save (MPS) indicates the capacity of the household / person to save with a given level of income. As indicated elsewhere in the study, the Marginal Propensity to Save could be derived from Marginal Propensity to Consume by the relationship $MPS = (1 - MPC)$. Using this relationship, the MPS in the women unorganised household was derived and it was $(1 - 0.884) 0.116$, which implied that with every increase in income by one rupee, the household might have the capacity to save `0.12.

From the analysis, it is evident that most of the per capita income earned was spent on the consumption and little to the tune of Rs.0.12 was available for saving. This indicated that persons in the women unorganised households were living in intense poverty and they spent more on the consumption.

Therefore the hypothesis 'the marginal propensity to consume (MPC) is comparatively higher for overall unorganised women workers in the study area' is proved in this study.

iii. Problem Faced by the Unorganised Women Workers

The following problems were faced by the unorganised women workers in Tirunelveli district: no fixed wages, Non-implementation of the minimum wages act, low wage, non-implementation of welfare measure for non union workers, permanent disability in work, and frequently health problem.

Table 4 -Problem Faced by the Unorganised Women Workers

	Domestic Workers		Construction Workers		Beedi Workers	
Problems	Garrett Ranking Mean Score	Rank	Garrett Ranking Mean Score	Rank	Garrett Ranking Mean Score	Rank
No fixed wages	63.18	I	52.25	II	65.31	I
Non-implementation of the minimum wage act	50.02	IV	41.48	V	49.79	IV
Low wage	52.62	II	49.80	IV	51.84	II
Non-implementation of welfare measure for non union workers	41.90	V	51.71	III	40.07	VI
Permanent disability in work	39.97	VI	40.08	VI	41.41	V
Frequently health problem	52.27	III	64.65	I	51.55	III

Sources: Primary Data

According to Garrett Ranking technique domestic workers are estimate. The ‘no fixed wages’ got the first rank with 63.18 per cent of the workers have this problem. It was followed by ‘low wage’ got the second rank with 52.62 per cent of workers. ‘frequently health problem’ got third rank with 52.27 per cent of population. ‘non implementation of

minimum wage act' got the fourth rank with 50.02 per cent of workers. 'The non implementation of welfare measures for non-union workers' got the fifth rank with 41.90 per cent of workers and 'Permanent disability in work' got the sixth rank with 39.97 per cent of workers.

According to Garrett Ranking technique construction workers are estimate. The 'Frequently health problem' got the first rank with 64.65 per cent of the workers have this problem. It was followed by 'no fixed wage' got the second rank with 52.25 per cent of workers. 'non implementation of welfare measures for non-union workers' got third rank with 51.71 per cent of population. 'low wage' got the fourth rank with 49.80 per cent of workers. 'Non implementation of minimum wage act' got the fifth rank with 41.48 per cent of workers and 'Permanent disability in work' got the sixth rank with 40.08 per cent of workers.

According to Garrett Ranking technique beedi workers are estimate. The 'no fixed wage' got the first rank with 65.31 per cent of the workers have this problem. It was followed by 'low wage' got the second rank with 51.84 per cent of workers. 'Frequently health problem' got third rank with 51.55 per cent of population. 'Non implementation of minimum wage act' got the fourth rank with 49.79 per cent of workers. 'Permanent disability in work' got the fifth rank with 41.41 per cent of workers and 'non implementation of welfare measures for non-union workers' got the sixth rank with 40.07 per cent of workers.

VII. Suggestions and Recommendations

Based on this study, some suggestions and recommendations are made as a part of improving and development of living standards of the women workers in unorganised sectors namely, domestic, construction and beedi workers in Tirunelveli district to the employers, Non government organizations, state and central governments.

- ❖ In the study area Tirunelveli district the wages of domestic, construction and beedi workers are very low. In ranking technique 'no fixed wage found' 1st place in domestic and beedi workers, followed by 2nd place for construction workers. So the

state and central governments should fix minimum wage and strictly implemented the minimum wage rate to the unorganised workers particularly to the women workers.

- ❖ In the study area the women do not have any other employment opportunities because most of them are illiterate. In this context they are forced to continue to do same work namely, domestic, construction and beedi work in the study area. The government should give some awareness campaign and programmes to the unorganised women worker for getting better employment opportunities to increase their standard of living.
- ❖ The saving habit of the women working as domestic, construction and beedi workers is low in the study area. So the government should create awareness and opportunities to the workers to improve the saving habit for their better future.
- ❖ The women workers are exploited and abused by different ways verbally, physically and sexually by the employers. In domestic work they are abused by the employers in the home while doing cleaning and washing. The construction workers are abused by the employers and contractors by giving false promise to increase wage levels. In the beedi work they are verbally abused by the employers in the work place.
- ❖ The domestic, construction and beedi women workers are not assured of work throughout the year and they are having seasonal and temporary jobs. Their physical capacity and health problem force them to absent for many day's even when the jobs are available. The government provides the unemployment benefits to many people under different programmes. In the same manner women workers in domestic, construction and beedi industry should also be provided special assistance to the seasonal workers.
- ❖ Government should provide awareness programme on savings, education and income generating activities for the unorganised workers because many of them are illiterate people in the study area.
- ❖ Majority of the workers are not aware of the social security schemes like insurance, health policy, bonus implemented in Government of India as well as Tamilnadu. So the government should convey the schemes which are available for unorganised workers in India through TV, Radio and newspapers.

- ❖ In the study area about 41.42 per cent of the constructions workers felt that labour unions are inefficient in the study area. So the government should develop the Trade Union to improve the standard of living.

VIII. Conclusion

The present study, concludes that the women workers in unorganised sectors namely domestic, construction and beedi workers in Tirunelveli district proved that a good amount of financial turn over by women workers which helped to uplift the family status in this study area. For domestic workers, performance is not justified by the labour value due to their work nature, occupational risk, lack of safety measures to achieve a better life. For construction workers, their employment, economic condition and job satisfaction level is not fully satisfactory in this study area. The construction industry is one of the largest employer of labours in India. The contactors are not giving awareness about the law, state and central government schemes to the construction workers. In beedi workers, they played a significant role in the determination of financial strength in the study area though these industries may create a series of health problems for the chosen sample, the women beedi workers. The state and central Governments should assure the safety of the women beedi workers by introducing novel ideas in the beedi making process.

The government must take necessary steps to improve the standard of living, to promote and implement various social security schemes, minimum wages act, pension, medical facilities, loan, educational facilities for the children's. Most of the unorganised workers particularly women worker are not in direct contact with the employers. There is some gap between the workers and employers. In this regard the agent will take many advantages with the workers. In unorganised sectors there are many abuses like, verbal, physical and sexual abuses to the women at work place. So that the government should take necessary rules and regulations to ensure their safety. Future prospects, the Government should try to arrange the alternative employment opportunities to the workers. The researcher will give Government of India and the Government of Tamilnadu to wipe out the tears of women workers in unorganised sector namely, domestic, construction and beedi workers by developing and implementing various suggestions and recommendation in the study.

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