SOCIO ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF WOMEN WORKERS IN UNORGANISED SECTOR: A STUDY OF SALES WOMEN IN TEXTILE SHOPS IN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM CORPORATION

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ABSTRACT

The unorganized sector is a significant and influential component of many economies around the world. Unorganized sector provides income and employment opportunities to the people. A large number of women from weaker sections of the society are attracted to this sector. Despite its importance, the unorganized sector also faces challenges such as lack of legal protections for workers, vulnerability to exploitation, limited access to formal financial services, and barriers to growth and formalization. The socio-economic conditions of women in the textile shops can vary depending on factors such as geographic location, the specific segment of the textile shops, and local regulations. The present study focused on the socio-economic conditions of women in textile shops in Kerala.

Keywords unorganized sector, sales woman, textile shop

Introduction

The unorganised sector plays a crucial role in an economy in terms of employment and its contribution to the National Domestic Product, capital formation and saving. The unorganised sector generates income earning opportunities for a large number of people. According to National Commission for Enterprise in the Unorganized Sector, "The unorganised sector consists of all unincorporated on a proprietary operated private prisons owned by individuals or households engaged in the sale and production Partnership basis and with less than ten total workers".(August 2007)

Large number of workers is engaged in the unorganised sector. Most of them are unskilled or semi-skilled; this makes them more vulnerable among the workforce. As per Economics Survey, in 2021- 22 around 43.99 crores people are working in the unorganised sector in India. The

major part of the women workforce in India and other developing countries work in the unorganised sector. Meanwhile in Kerala female participation is 79.6 percent. There are various reasons why majority women engage in an unorganised sector. The main reason is the need for financial assistance and it is easy to enter in this sector without any specific recruitment and qualification. In this sector the women workers suffer from many problems such as discrimination in wages, poor working conditions, exploitation, lack of maternity benefits, and a non sympathetic attitude of the employer. Without any protection women workers in this sector are left in a vulnerable situation. The majority of these women are from low income families. Also these women usually provide their income to their family. They also have to manage their household duties with work.

The female work population rate in Kerala is lower than men. According to a periodic ilabour force survey, the total female work participation is only 28.2 percent in 2020-21. In Kerala women face many other issues like high unemployment rate, concentration in the unorganised sector, limited representation in decision making, economic and gender discrimination. Sales women are the important category of women workers in unorganised sector. In Kerala a substantial number of women are engaged as sales women in textiles shops. The condition of these women is very pathetic.

Objective of the study

1. To analyse the socio economic conditions of sales women in textile shops in Thiruvananthapuram Corporation.

2. To examine income, expenditure and savings pattern of sales women in Thiruvananthapuram Corporation.

Methodology of the Study

For the present study, both primary and secondary data were used. Primary data were collected from 50 sales women in various textile shops in Thiruvananthapuram Corporation. For the collection of Primary data, a structured interview schedule was prepared and administered among the respondents. The secondary data were collected from journals, articles and various government reports.

Data analysis

Table 1: Age wise classification of Respondents

Age Group	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
20-30	19	38
30-40	28	56
Above 40	3	6
Total	**50**	**100**

(Source - Primary survey)

Majority of women workers 56 percent belong to the middle age group category 30- 40 and 38 percent of respondents in the age group between 20-30. The percentage of respondents in the age group above 40 is only 6 percent.

Table 2: Education level of Respondents

Level of Education	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Primary education	18	36
Below SSLC	23	46
SSLC / higher secondary	9	18
Total	**50**	**100**

(Source - primary survey)

The above Table presents 46 percent of respondent's education level as below SSLC and 36 percent of respondents have primary education. Only 18 percent have completed their SSLC or higher secondary education.

Table 3: Distribution of women according to marital status

Marital status	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Married	38	76

Unmarried	8	16
Separate/Divorce	1	2
Widow	3	6
Total	**50**	**100**

(Source - Primary Survey)

Table 3 discloses that 76 percent of respondents are married, 16 percent are unmarried, 6 percent are widows and the remaining 2 percent are separated /divorce.

Table 4: Category of Respondents

Category	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
APL	13	26
BPL	37	74
Total	**50**	**100**

(Source - Primary Survey)

The present study showed that 74 percentage respondents come under the BPL category and the remaining 26 percentage respondents come under the APL.

Table 5: Size of Family of Respondents

Number of Members	Number of Respondent	Percentage (%)
Less than 3 members	8	16
4-5 members	28	56
More than 5 members	14	28
Total	**50**	**100**

(Source - primary survey)

The study revealed that 56 percent of respondents have 4-5 family members in the household and 28 percent of respondents have more than 5 family members in the household. Remaining 16 percent of respondents have less than 3 members in the household.

Table 6: Nature of housing

Nature of housing	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Rented house	23	46
Own house	27	54
Total	**50**	**100**

(Source -primary survey)

Table 6 shows the nature of housing of the respondents. The present study shows that 54 percent of respondents live in their own house and 46 percent of respondents live in a rented house.

Table 7: Monthly Incomes of the respondents

Income	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Less than 5000	7	14
5000-10000	39	78
More than 10000	4	8
Total	**50**	**100**

(Source - Primary survey)

Table 7 discloses the majority of respondents earned an income between 5000-10000. 14 percent of respondents had income below 5000. Only 8 percent of respondents had a monthly income up to 10000 .This showed that most of the respondents work for very low income.

Table 8: Monthly expenditure of respondents

Total monthly expenditure	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Below 4000	18	36
5001- 6000	21	42
6001- 9000	11	22
Total	**50**	**100**

(Source - primary survey)

The table 8 shows that 42 percent of respondents spend between 5001-6000 rupees , 36 percent of respondents spend below 4000 rupees, 22 percent of respondents spend between 6001- 9000 rupees.

Table 9: Savings Habit of Respondents

Form of savings	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Post office	2	4
Commercial bank	3	6
Chit fund	8	16
More than one form	13	26
No savings	24	48
Total	**50**	**100**

(Source - Primary Survey)

The above Table showed that most of the respondents have no savings habit and 26 percent of respondents are having more than one form of savings and 16 percent are saved money by local Chit Fund companies and 6 percent have commercial Bank savings and only 4 percent have post office savings.

Conclusion

Sales womens in textile shops were work with low wages. Majority have education below SSLC. They are very much unorganized in nature. To improve the socio-economic conditions of textile women in Kerala, efforts should take to address gender disparities, promote women's empowerment, enhance workplace safety and conditions, and provide access to education and healthcare. Additionally, policies that support the growth of the textile industry while ensuring fair wages and labour rights for workers are essential for creating sustainable livelihoods for women in this sector. In textile shops, they get only very meager income and 48 percent of respondents have no savings. It is found that a major part of their income is spent on food and clothing. Another considerable portion of their income is spent for medical purposes, payment of rent and children's education.

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