

# SUPPORTING SERVICES FOR WORKING WOMEN IN INDIA IN UNORGANIZED SECTOR: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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## Introduction:

**“Empowering Women is a prerequisite for creating a good nation, when women are empowered, society with stability is assured. Empowerment of women is essential as their value systems lead to the development of a good family, good society and ultimately good nation” – Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam**

The empowerment of women is one of the central issues in the process of development of countries all over the world. Empowerment is one of the key factors in determining the success of development is the status and position of women in the society. This means that the neglect of women in the development process of any country constitutes a human resource waste. The task before any government, therefore, should be that of moving steadily and firmly in the direction of economic development by involving women. True development means the development in the three categories of women. These are Individual, Social and Economic development. Individual development means increased skills and capability, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well being. Increasing capacity connotes social development, while economic development is determined by the increased capacity of the members of a society in dealing with their environment. This emphasis means that development at the individual stage subsumes both the social and economic categories of development.

## **Understanding Economic Power:**

At the core of the concept of empowerment is the idea of power. The possibility of empowerment depends on two things. First, empowerment requires that power can change. If power cannot change, if it is inherent in positions or people, then empowerment is not possible, nor is empowerment conceivable in any meaningful way. In other words, if power can change, then empowerment is possible, Second, the concept of empowerment depends upon the idea that power can expand. This second point reflects our common experiences of power rather than how we think about power. Empowerment is a multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives. It is a process that fosters power in people, for use in their own lives, their communities, and their society, by acting on issues that they define as important.<sup>1</sup>

**Three challenges for women:** (1) Security (2) Restricted Mobility (3) Education

### **1.Security:**

The most serious issue faced by women is that of a perceived lack of security. In reality however, the existing laws protecting women’s basic security are inadequately enforced and there has not been satisfactory effort to introduce additional revised or supplementary measure that are better able to address the gender-specific issue of women’s lack of security. The lack of effective legal framework for protecting security of women underlies and reinforces the corresponding lack of laws protecting the rights of women with

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<sup>1</sup> Policies and Legislation for empowering Women: S Shyni, Coimbatore, [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

regards to equality issues, sexual harassment regulation, equality of opportunity, and proportional representation in employment, particularly within the security and law enforcement sector. What women are left with is environments in which they are left with unequal freedom and security to men in terms of their ability to exercise their right to safely enjoy being independently mobile, attend school, or seek employment opportunities.

## **2. Restricted Mobility:**

The effect of women's perceived insecurity when travelling independently, especially outside of their settlements in public spaces, manifests itself in the unequal and disproportionately low representation of females in primary education straight through to employment and participation in politics. Insecurity consequently leads to restricted mobility of women and their reduced access to information. As a result, women are unaware of the importance of health maintenance, the benefits of becoming actively involved in the public sphere, and their legal rights. Women experience difficulties in exercising their rights under marriage, divorce and alimony. Child marriage is an area in particular that still required significant improvement, as substantial sections of rural girls marries before the legal minimum age of 18 years. However, such practices encourage women's increased dependency upon their family and community, and in so doing, prevent women's empowerment.

## **3. Education:**

Education is especially central to women's empowerment in so far as it enables women to become more productive both inside and outside the household. Illiteracy has a limiting effect on women's ability to access relevant information. A modern and more practical curriculum needs to be adopted to replace what is now regarded as an outdated, impractical and rigid public school syllabus inhospitable to any reform. A restructured and revitalized education system is a necessary step for girls and women towards becoming better informed, and towards developing their skills for entry into the countries work force.<sup>2</sup>

## **SUPPORT SERVICES FOR WOMEN:**

The provision of support services for women, like child care facilities, including creches at work places and educational institutions, homes for aged and disabled needs to be expanded and improved to create an enabling environment and ensure their full cooperation in social, political and economic life. Women-friendly personnel policies need to be drawn up to encourage women to participate effectively in the development process.

## **WOMEN EMPLOYMENT IN INDIA- A POLICY FRAMEWORK:**

The status of women in India has been undergoing a sea-change supported by constitutional guarantees to ensure dignity and equal opportunities, their active participation in all walks of life including, education, politics, sport etc has been growing. Taking note of women's role in the nation building activities, the Government had declared 2001 as the year of Women's empowerment by adopting a National Policy to offer "Swashakti" to women. The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles of State Policy. The constitution not only guarantees equality to women, but also empowers the state to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. The National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments to

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<sup>2</sup> A Policy Framework on Women Employment: Ministry of Women & Child Development, Govt. of India

the constitution in 1993 have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local levels.

India Vision 2020 document, while discussing about women in the labour force has, inter alia, mentioned that secure childcare support services are necessary for working women. The 11th Five Year Plan document of the planning Commission incorporated various schemes and programmes for women and child development. It also mentions about the setting up of creches in unorganized sector and restructuring and revamping of the existing Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for the children of working mothers<sup>3</sup>.

### **ROLE OF WORKING WOMEN'S FORUM FOR SERVICE SUPPORT:**

The Working Women's Forum was created in Madras to organize women living in slums and working as small-scale traders and vendors. The support services extended by the forum include childcare, education, health and family planning. The forum was set up with the following objectives<sup>4</sup>:

- To create an association of women employed in the unorganized sector or informal sector;
- To identify and address the critical needs of working women
- To mobilize working women for joint economic and social action by exerting group pressure to demand their social and political rights
- To improve the entrepreneurial skills of working women through training, material inputs, credit and extension services and
- To organize support for social services necessary for working women and their families

Today, India is a force in the global economy, with the high demand for talent. A key source of talent is educated Indian women. While Corporate India has not yet fully recognized this talent pool, the growing gender diversity in Indian managerial ranks offers a pathway for change for Indian women. As social values change, Indian women have been entering the workforce in the past couple decades. Globalization has brought an influx of multinational corporations in India, with western Human Resource practices and concepts such as gender diversity in leadership roles. As opportunities for women in management in India slowly increase, women are entering professions previously seen as the domain of men in the corporate world: advertising, banking, civil services, engineering, financial services, manufacturing, police and armed forces and emerging fields such as IT and communications.

Indian women as managers offer key strengths as follows:

- Ability to network with colleagues
- Ability to perceive and understand situations
- Strong sense of dedication, loyalty and commitment to their organizations
- Ability to multitask
- Collaborative work style- solicit input from others, with respect for ideas
- Crisis management skills
- Willingness to share information (interactive leadership style)
- Sensitivity in relationships (e.g. compassionate, emphatic, understanding)

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<sup>3</sup> Women Empowerment-Equal Rights, Equal Opportunities- Smt. Anita Patnaik., July 7, 2010 Women's Issue- India Current Affairs

<sup>4</sup> Working Women's Forum.htm

- Behaving in a gender neutral manner

To be successful in business, women develop management styles that make it more comfortable for men to work with and / or report to female manager. Overall, women prefer an interactive style, and men prefer a command and control style<sup>5</sup>.

### **EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN UNORGANIZED SECTOR:**

India's economy has undergone a substantial transformation since the country's independence in 1947. Agriculture now accounts for only one-third of the gross domestic product (GDP), down from 59% in 1950 and a wide range of modern industries and support services now exist. In spite of these changes, agriculture continues to dominate employment, employing two-thirds of all workers<sup>6</sup>.

Since the times immemorial, worth of the work done or services rendered by women has not been recognized. India is a multifaceted society where generalization could apply to the entire nation's various regional, religious, social and economic groups. Nevertheless, certain broad circumstances in which Indian women live affect the ways they participate in the economy. Indian society is extremely hierarchical with virtually everyone ranked relative to others according to their caste (or caste-like group), class, wealth and power. This rank even exists in areas where it is not openly acknowledged, such as certain business settings. Women are expected to be chaste and especially modest in all actions that may constrain their ability to perform in their workplace on an equal basis with men. When a family suffers economically, people often think that a woman should go out and work, yet at the same time the women's participation in employment outside the home is viewed as "slightly inappropriate, subtly wrong, and definitely dangerous to their chastity and womanly virtue". When a family recovers from an economic crisis it attempts to improve its status, women may be kept at home as a demonstration of the family's morality and as a symbol of its financial security. Working women of all segments of Indian society faces various forms of discrimination including sexual harassment<sup>7</sup>.

### **CHALLENGES OF EMPLOYMENT IN UNORGANIZED SECTOR:**

Informal sector is referred to as unorganized sector. This sector broadly corresponds to the household sector including private unincorporated enterprises. The unorganized sector also includes some formal activities on which there is no regular system of data availability<sup>8</sup>. The Government of India set-up a 'National Commission on Enterprises in the Unorganized/Informal Sector' through a resolution dated 20<sup>th</sup> September 2004 as an advisory body and watchdog for the informal sector<sup>9</sup>. The terms of reference of the Commission included (i) review of the status of unorganized/Informal sector in India including the nature of enterprises, their size, spread and scope and magnitude of employment (ii) review the existing arrangements for estimating employment and unemployment in the informal sector (iii) suggest elements of an employment strategy focussing on the informal sector (iv) review the social security system available for labour

<sup>5</sup> Perspectives on Women in Management in India-Strategic Human Resource Management India:  
<http://www.shrmindia.org/>

<sup>6</sup> Women Employment in India: Azad India Foundation-Ms. Yuman Hussain, Executive Director:  
[www.Azadindia.org](http://www.Azadindia.org)

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Issues and Challenges in Unorganized Sector, Articlesbase: Legal Service of India  
Article:[www.articlesbase.com](http://www.articlesbase.com)

<sup>9</sup> Re-defining of Unorganized Sector in India, National Commission on Enterprises in the Unorganized /Informal Sector (Delhi Group) India: Expert Group Report- 2006

in the informal sector, and make recommendations for expanding their coverage (v) identify constraints faced by small enterprises with regard to freedom of carrying out the enterprise, access to raw materials, finance, skills, infrastructure technology and markets and suggest measures to provide institutional support and linkages to facilitate easy access to them etc<sup>10</sup>.

### **WOMEN WORKING IN THE UNORGANIZED SECTOR:**

Women economic participation can be mentioned in the field of production of goods and services accounted in the national income statistics. However, female work participation has always been low at 26% compared to 52% of men. The problem is that women have always been at work; only the definitions of work and work plan have never been defined or realistic to include their contribution to the economy and the society<sup>11</sup>.

Women work mainly for economic independence, for economic necessity, as some women are qualified enough to work, for a sense of achievement and to provide service to the society. Most Indian women by and large undertake “productive work” only under economic compulsion. This is the reason for high female participation rates in economically under privileged communities. Usually upper class women are limited to homes. Work participation rate is found to be higher among rural women (27%) than the urban women (10%). The main workers are those who ‘work’ for the major part of the year. Female main workers constitute 14.65 of the population and men 50.54%. Female marginal workers constitute 6.26% of the population whereas males being only 0.98%. Most of the women are found to be employed in agricultural activities and in the unorganized sector. An estimate of the World Bank shows that 90% of the women working in the informal sector are not included in the official statistics and their work is undocumented and considered as disguised wage work, unskilled, low paying and do not provide benefits to the workers. Statistics show that vast majorities of Indians work in Agriculture where 55% of the population is female agricultural workers and 30% of the men are labourers and not cultivators<sup>12</sup>.

### **Women’s Working Conditions:**

Today women are overworked, women work roughly twice as many as many hours as men. Women’s contribution to agriculture- whether it be subsistence farming or commercial agriculture- when measured in terms of the number of tasks performed and time spent, is greater than men. In Indian Himalayas agricultural operation on a one-hectare land a pair of bullocks works 1,064 hours, a man 1,212-hour and a woman 3,485 hours in a year.

In Andhra Pradesh the workday of a woman agricultural labourer during the agricultural season lasts for 15 hours, from 4 am to 8 p.m., with an hour’s rest in between. Her male counter part works for seven to eight hours, from 5 am to 10 am or 11 am and from 3pm to 5 pm<sup>13</sup>. Man has monopolized his skill in plough culture against women handling the plough. The operations performed by men were those that entailed the use of machinery and draught animals, thereby using animal, hydraulic, mechanical or electrical energy, women almost always relied on manual labour, using only their own energy. “Rice transplantation’s, the most arduous and labour intensive task in rice cultivation, is carried out entirely by women without the help of any tools. Not only do women perform more

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<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Condition of Women Working in the Unorganized Sector: Legal Service India.com

<sup>12</sup> *ibid*

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

tasks, their work is also more arduous than that undertaken by men. Both transplantation and weeding require women to spend the whole day and work in muddy soil with their hands. Moreover, they work the entire day under the intensely hot sun while men's work, such as ploughing and watering the fields, is invariably carried out early in the morning before the sun gets too hot<sup>14</sup>.

Women's working conditions result in premature and stillbirths. The tasks performed by women are usually those that required to be one in position for long periods of time, which can adversely affect their reproductive health. A study in a rice-growing belt of coastal Maharashtra found that 40% of all infant deaths occurred in the months of July to October. The majority of the births are either premature or stillbirths. This is attributed to the squatting position that had to be assumed during July and August, the rice transplanting months<sup>15</sup>.

### **Women are mistreated:**

Violence against women and girls is the most pervasive human rights violation in the world today. Women have to face at home forces them to work for meager wages and without social security. However, the working conditions of women in this sector are improving. **Women face a lot of Sexual harassment in the course of employment. Due to their inability to work for long hours they are not employed in sensitive or crucial positions.** Woman has to work beyond working hours, even in advanced state of pregnancy. Women have to work in night shifts and thereby they are sexually abused. HIV AIDS other sexually transmitted diseases, respiratory problems, arthritis and reproductive problems are more prevalent among women in mines<sup>16</sup>.

### **SOCIAL SECURITY FOR UNORGANIZED SECTOR:**

Social security essentially means protection from socially acknowledged detrimental conditions such as old age, poverty, unemployment etc. It can be termed as 'basic security' ensuring access to the basic necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, education and medical care. It is both, a concept and system<sup>17</sup>.

Social security was first officially recognized in 1919 by the International Labour Organization (ILO) which stressed on the need and protection of workers against sickness, disease and injury arising out of their employment, pension for old age, and protection of the interests of the workers who were employed in countries other than their own. It was consequently accepted by the General Assembly of the United Nations while adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) which states that every member of the society has a right to social security<sup>18</sup>.

### **SOCIAL SECURITY IN INDIA:**

Although social security is not a fundamental right in India, the laws incorporating it drawn strength from the Directive Principles enumerated in our Constitution, which seek to achieve social, economic and political justice in all institutions of national life.

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<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Social Security for the Unorganized Sector- [jurisonline.India- From legal Information to Knowledge](http://jurisonline.India- From legal Information to Knowledge)

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*

- **Art. 41 of the constitution require the State to secure the right to work, to education and to public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement.**
- **Art.42 requires the State to secure just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief.**
- **Art.47 requires the State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and improvement of public health.**

The obligations cast on the state in the above Articles constitute Social Security. The concurrent list the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution also lays down social security issues in two of its items:

- **Item 23** –Social Security and Insurance, employment and Unemployment
- **Item 24-** Welfare of labour including conditions of work, provident funds, employer’s liability, workmen’s compensation, invalidity and old age pension and maternity benefits.

**The chief social security legislation’s enacted in line with these provisions include:**

- The Employees State Insurance Act 1948, which provides for comprehensive medical care and monetary compensation in case of sickness, maternity, death or disablement.
- The Minimum Wages Act 1948, which fixes a minimum amount of wages to be paid to employees.
- The Employees Provident Funds Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1952 which provide provident fund, superannuation pension and family pension in case of death during service.
- The Workmen’s Compensation Act 1923, which requires payment of compensation to the workman or his family in cases of employment related injuries, resulting in death or disability.
- The Maternity Benefit Act 1961, which provides for 12 weeks wages during maternity as well as paid leave in certain other related contingencies.
- The Payment of Gratuity Act 1972, which provides 15 days wages for each year of service to employees who have worked for five years or more in establishments having a minimum of 10 workers<sup>19</sup>.

### **CURRENT SOCIAL SECURITY MEASURE FOR THE UNORGANIZED SECTOR:**

The unorganized sector can be broadly categorized into four groups:

- (a) Occupation wise- small and marginal farmers, landless labourers, those engaged in animal husbandry etc.
- (b) Nature of employment- Migrant Workers, contract and casual labour
- (c) Specially distressed categories- Toddy Tappers, Scavengers, loaders and unloaders
- (d) Service category- Midwives, domestic workers, barbers, vegetable vendor’s etc.

### **EMPOWERMENT OF UNORGANIZED SECTOR WORKERS:**

In view of the problems faced by the workers in unorganized sector, the Government of India enacted the Unorganized Workers’ Social Security Act 2008. In India approximately 93% of the total workforce is in the unorganized sector. Due to globalization, workers, especially in the traditional and unorganized sectors, are alienated

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*

from the mainstream of the society in terms of welfare schemes, benefits and even just wages. Besides they are being subjected to exploitation due to lack of unionism, legal protection and social security, they are the most vulnerable as they do not have any bargaining power<sup>20</sup>.

The following are the problems faced by the workers in the unorganized sector:

- The people working in the unorganized sector are now being more considered as objects and machines to achieve the target of maximum production. Whenever and wherever human beings are placed as materials means of production, they are treated as instruments.
- The unorganized workers have few legal protections. 40-50% of male workers and 81-87% female workers receive daily wages below the minimum wages recommended by the labour ministry of 49 rupees in rural areas and 67 rupees in urban areas. Women and child workers are subjected to severe exploitation. Most of them work from home at piece rates, rather than in factories or workplaces. They work long hours for little return.
- Employers prefer this type of home-based work because it is “more productive”. So, today the situation in India as a whole is that, these workers are denied of health security and human dignity etc.
- More than that they do not have protection of labour laws like, Minimum Wages Act, Equal Remuneration Act and Workmen Compensation Act, due to ignorance and lack of effective enforcement even the deductions from their wages under Provident Fund law do not actually provide social security coverage to them due to poor enforcement and lack of awareness.
- The workers in the unorganized sector are exploited in numerous ways like long hours of work without decent wage and security of the job and with no provision of support during contingencies like hospitalization and old age etc.
- Education of the children of the unorganized sector workers suffer since the income of the worker has hardly been able to provide one meal a day, leave alone nutritious meal. The voice of the workers in the unorganized sector is not heard, as at large they do not have collective bargaining capacity due to lack of organizations of unions. Due to globalization there are new unorganized sectors arising like shop-employees, street vendors, computer operators, migrant workers, women workers and child labourers<sup>21</sup>.

The Unorganized Sector Workers Act is a broad legislation that covers workers scattered throughout the length and breadth of India. The Act propose to create Workers Facilitation Centres is a positive step but for the fact that it would be predominantly bureaucratic set-up. This set-up does guarantee for internal democracy with sufficient law enforcement system and workers friendly attitude with the help of unions and labour NGOs. Such set up not only have the trust of these workers, but they would also be more interested in ensuring the benefits and schemes reach the intended people. The available Social Security is Scheme based and not right based. Most of the schemes should be right based not project oriented. Projected schemes can change according to mindset of ruling party. These have not legally binding and not questionable in court or legal set-ups. So these schemes rarely reach out to the real target group.

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<sup>20</sup> Legal Empowerment of Unorganized Sector Workers: Workers India Federation: [www.labour.info/unionbook.org/](http://www.labour.info/unionbook.org/)

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*

Unorganized workers organizations should make its activities more systematic, people oriented and legally binding through welfare programmes. Labour organization has to establish workers facilitation centres in village level with the help of trained facilitators or workers' leaders. This platform is being used to educate the working class about their rights, duties and availability of various government welfare schemes<sup>22</sup>. As a concept of Public Private Participation unorganized sector organizations to present the available schemes of unorganized workers in a coordinated way. This facilitation work is the need of the hour in India in order to safeguard the interests of the workers in the unorganized sector. Today unorganized workers need legal empowerment; it is systematic mapping or indemnifying worker like union memberships and renewals. Thus, union centre would facilitate the workers to acquire the welfare scheme benefits. Here union leader will be facilitator and union office would be facilitation centre where educate working class about their rights, duties and availability of various government welfare schemes for them. This approach would lead us to form Trade Unions of Unorganized workers with Self Help Groups, where worker would get independence and dignity, so that nation will be strong with secured or dignified workers as a whole with sense of work culture<sup>23</sup>.

### **SALIENT FEATURES OF UNORGANIZED SECTOR WORKERS ACT 2008:**

The Act gives provision of formation of National & State Social Security Boards which would have network of District and Panchayat through workers' facilitation centres all over the country. The Workers Facilitation Centre (WFC) will be main instrument for implementation of the Act (Chapter III 9).

The functions of the WFC are as follows:

- The registration of the workers should be the responsibility of the Workers Facilitation Center. So the section 12 (a) should be read as
- Registration of workers and giving them social security numbers with identity cards
- The function of Disputes Resolutions should be with the Workers Facilitation Center so Sec.12 ( c) should be read as:
- Resolution of labour disputes through conciliation and arbitration by setting up committees in consultation with State Board.
- The Workers Facilitation Center should also have functions of increasing skill and productivity. So in Section 12 the following clauses should be added:
- (a) Skill upgradation training to increase the skill of workers
  - (b) To provide marketing linkages to workers
  - (c) To constitute employment exchanges for unorganized sector
  - (d) To provide linkages for financial services to workers.

The welfare schemes envisaged under the Act are:

1. Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension
2. National Family Benefit Scheme
3. Janani Suraksha Yojana
4. Handloom Weavers' Comprehensive Welfare Scheme
5. Handloom Artisans' Comprehensive Welfare Scheme
6. Pension to Master Craft persons

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<sup>22</sup>. *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup>. *ibid.*

7. National Scheme for Welfare of Fishermen and Training and Extension
8. Janshree Bima Yojana
9. Aam Admi Bima Yojana
10. Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana

Creating awareness at the grass root levels is of utmost importance. Many of these workers are unaware of the benefits provided to them. This may be done by conducting workshops, holding awareness camps, printing leaflets in the local language etc.

### **IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON UNORGANIZED SECTOR:**

In the phase of globalization of capital most of the labour legislation's are deliberately excluding, for example, Factories Act 1948 which covers working conditions, health and safety, basic amenities like toilet, prohibition of child labour and night work for women and much more does not apply to the unorganized workers. Similarly the Employees State Insurance Act 1948 which is providing accident compensation, sickness and maternity benefits are not applying in the work places twenty workers without power. With this provision the owner splitting up an establishment into the small units which supposedly independent of each other and creating artificial breaks in employment to escape workers permanent issue<sup>24</sup>.

In the unorganized sector there are no health and safety conditions, proper working hours, basic amenities like toilets and crèches for children's. Violating their rights is very common thing. In work place dangers are very familiar to the workers. Most of the accidents are the result of the owners profit motive rather than on concern on workers life. Particularly these types of tragedies are increasing in the globalization era. In this sector usually Factory Acts did not implement and the governments did take serious measures to punish the culprit owners and helped the victimized workers families. The rulers of the government called to the people to sacrifice for the country development in the time of New Economic Policies initiation. So rulers may keep silent on workers death and their hazard conditions in work place for sake of the country development and GDP growth rate<sup>25</sup>.

The unorganized workers have no employment status, at any second they can be dismissed without cause. The worker employment simply depend the wish and will of the owners and organizing and demanding the stable livelihoods leads to their dismissal. The globalization causes to the many hazards, closures and large scale retrenchments are taking place. Contract and apprentice systems of employment have also increased in the organized sector. Machines for digging ponds, ready mix concrete for roof machines for laying and even sweeping of roads, transplanting and harvesting machines in agriculture have led to a drastic decrease in rural and urban employment in the unorganized sector. The life and livelihood become central issue for not only to the organized sector workers but more so with unorganized workers, since the retrenchments are invisible and no compensation is providing. In the era of globalization the rate of growth in employment drastically declined from 2.04% per year during 1983-94 to 0.98 % in 1994-2000<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> Unorganized Sector in Globalization Phase: Countercurrents.org- T Venkateshwarlu

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*

## ESTIMATES OF EMPLOYMENT IN UNORGANIZED SECTOR:

The National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), which has been conducting surveys of unorganized enterprises at periodical intervals, generally adopted the following criteria for the identification of unorganized sector.

- (i) In the case of manufacturing industries, the enterprises not covered under the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) is taken to constitute the unorganized sector.
- (ii) In the case of service industries, all enterprises, except those run by the Government (Central, State and Local Body) and in the public sector were regarded as unorganized.

The NSSO also conducted a separate informal sector survey in 1999-2000 and 'all non-agricultural enterprises, excluding those covered under the ASI, with type of ownership as either proprietary or partnership were treated as informal non-agricultural enterprise for the purpose of survey<sup>27</sup>.

**TABLE: Estimates of Employment in Informal Sector**  
(Estimated Number of Workers (Million))

Sl.No.	Sector	Male	Female	Total
1	<b>Agriculture</b>			
1.1	Rural	137.51	87.09	224.60
1.2	Urban	4.95	3.24	8.19
	<b>Total</b>	<b>142.46</b>	<b>90.33</b>	<b>232.79</b>
2	<b>Non-Agriculture</b>			
2.1	Rural	40.35	11.68	52.03
2.2	Urban	45.13	10.36	55.49
	<b>Total</b>	<b>85.48</b>	<b>22.04</b>	<b>107.52</b>
3	<b>All India</b>			
3.1	Rural	177.86	98.77	276.63
	Urban	50.08	13.60	63.68
	<b>Total</b>	<b>227.94</b>	<b>112.37</b>	<b>340.31</b>

## CONCLUSION:

Conditions of working women in India have improved considerably in the recent years. Ironically, despite the improvement in their status, they still find themselves dependent on men. It is because of the fact that man in patriarchal society has always wielded economic independence and power to take decision. Since the working women earns an independent income in the same patriarchal set up, where the basic infrastructure of society has hardly changed, though her own role within the same structure is passing through a transitional phase, it is but natural that should would remain vulnerable to exploitation even in her economically independent state. Society perhaps yet needs to accord due recognition to women to take the lead role and women, at the same time need to be oriented vigorously towards assuming this role in the society.

<sup>27</sup> Expert Group on Informal Sector Statistics (Delhi Group): 2006- Outline and Progress Report on the Manual On Surveys of Informal Employment and Informal Sector- National Commission on Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector.