

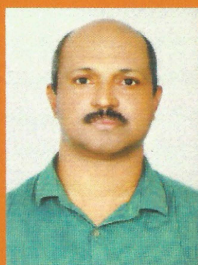


A JOURNEY INTO THE WORLD OF WOMEN

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MARGINALIZATION OF WOMEN WORKERS IN UNORGANIZED SECTOR IN KERALA

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Abstract

Kerala economy is to a great extent characterized by large number of people working in unorganized sectors as unorganized workers. Women working in the unorganized sector deserve a separate mention as they are much marginalized. Female workers form the largest segment of Kerala's unorganized workforce. Majority of women work in unorganized sectors for low wages due to low level of skills, illiteracy, ignorance and surplus labour and thus face high level of exploitation. The social and economic profile of female worker is greatly affected by the nature of industrial sector where they work. There should be adequate social security measures and institutions for women empowerment to improve the condition of female labourers in unorganized sector in Kerala.

Keywords: *Unorganized sector, Marginalization, Casualisation, Social security Measures*

Introduction

The period of liberalization has registered an increasing labour force participation of women in the world. These trends are largely recognized as the feminization of labour (ILO, 2004). The wages and working condition of women in the informal sector tend to be worse and there is little or no social security. The majority of the women in the unorganized sector are engaged in traditional activities such as agriculture, animal husbandry, manufacturing activities like pickle making, garment making etc. such activities are always characterized by traditional technologies, low capital, seasonal work etc. Gender related inequalities have resulted in the concentration of women in unorganized sectors and unequal pay for equal work.

One of the important trends towards increasing the feminization of workforce in the non-agriculture sector was observed in Kerala. There is increasing feminization of the workforce as women are engaged in operating most production processes. The overall number of female workers is more than that of male workers. Women are more vulnerable to informal employment than men to be working in the most disadvantaged and marginalized segment of the informal economy (ILO, 2013). There are three aspects which they consider to be collectively an index for women's marginalization.