



The predicament of unorganized women employed in textile industry- A case study of Doddaballapur Taluk in Bengaluru Rural District

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Abstract

Although they confront a number of socioeconomic and occupational obstacles, unorganized women workers in Doddaballapur Taluk in Bengaluru Rural District, Karnataka's textile sector are essential to the local economy. This study looks into these workers' access to possibilities for skill development, legal awareness, health and safety concerns, and socioeconomic circumstances. Structured questionnaires were used to gather data from 250 workers using a descriptive and quantitative research methodology. The study examines how important variables including age, income, education, and marital status affect opinions about pay, job security, safety, and general working conditions. The results show that the majority of workers have low incomes and less formal education, which limits their employment options. There are still gaps in legal understanding and safety precautions, despite the fact that many report job stability, fair pay, and respect at work. According to chi-square tests, views of working conditions are significantly influenced by age, although income and education have minimal effect. This research work makes suggestions for expanding legal awareness, addressing gender inequities in the business, guaranteeing greater worker safety, improving educational access, and improving compensation structures.

Keywords: Compensation structures, fair pay, socio economic conditions, worker safety

Introduction

The textile industry in India is vital to the economy of the country. It contributes to over 6 per cent of the gross domestic product of India and earns 18 per cent of the Total foreign exchange earnings of the country. The textile industry consists of three instinct sectors, viz., ginning, spinning and weaving. The industry is the largest employer next only to agriculture which is the mainstay of the economy. Over 50 percent of the employees are women who help to sustain the family income. The garment industry alone employs four million workers and helps to support labour working in ancillary manufacturing buttons, zippers, sewing thread, embroidery thread, metal studs, poly bags, cartons, cardboard sheets, etc. One of the most important economic sectors in India is the textile industry, which employs millions of people, especially in areas like. Doddaballapur Taluk in Bengaluru Rural District It is sometimes referred to as India's "Knitwear Capital." Small and medium-sized textile companies have been the main drivers of Bengaluru Rural District's explosive industrial growth. Women make up a sizable share of the unorganized labor force in this industrial environment, performing a variety of labor-intensive tasks like knitting, sewing, dying, and packing. Women workers sometimes face marginalization due to a lack of formal employment contracts, social security benefits, and workplace protections. Unorganized employment in the textile business puts women workers at risk for terrible working conditions, low earnings, job insecurity, and limited access to healthcare and education. Socio-cultural issues that limit their upward mobility and perpetuate gender inequality exacerbate these difficulties. Because of this, Doddaballapur Taluk s unorganized women workers have a hazardous life as they attempt to strike a balance between their social and familial obligations and economic necessities. With an emphasis on their economic circumstances, health and safety concerns, social difficulties, legal awareness, and

chances for skill development, this study attempts to explore the complex predicament of unorganized women workers in the Bengaluru Rural District's textile sector. This research aims to identify policy implementation gaps and promote inclusive methods that improve their welfare and empowerment by offering a thorough examination of their lived experiences.

Literature Review

This literature review examines research and scholarly works on women working in the unorganized sector, the review examines research that analyzes living conditions, working, assessing the conditions, economic position, and social security measures for women in informal labor arrangements. Numerous studies have brought attention to the unstable living conditions that women in the unorganized sector must endure.

Patel *et al.* (2016)) ^[1] report occupational hazards and inadequate safety;

Jha (2015)) ^[2] finds low awareness of labour rights and social security among women workers

Agarwal (2014) ^[3] notes poverty and illiteracy as barriers;

Arti & Dr. Rajesh Kumar (2014) ^[4]. This study investigates the roles, challenges, and problems encountered by women working in the unorganized sector, providing insights into their working conditions and gender-related issues.

Rao and Suryanarayana (2013) ^[5] consider that with the entry of younger women in the export processing zones, market segmentation is being accentuated; female dominated jobs are being devalued, degraded and least paid. Though this does not augur well for women development, it has not deterred women from contributing to family survival, and studies do not want which highlight that it is women who settle down in the labour market as flower/ fruit vendors, domestic servants and allow the men to find suitable job leisurely or improve their skill.

Research Gap

There is little concentrated research on the particular circumstances of unorganized women workers in Bengaluru Rural District, despite the fact that many studies discuss women employed in the textile industry or in informal jobs in general. By offering a thorough grasp of their physical, social, and economic difficulties as well as an investigation of their legal awareness and chances for empowerment, this study seeks to close this knowledge gap.

Statement of the problem

Low pay, hazardous working conditions, and unstable employment are just a few of the serious issues that women in Bengaluru Rural District's unorganized textile industry confront. Despite making a substantial contribution to the sector, these employees face discrimination based on their gender and lack access to social security benefits and necessary legal protections. Additionally, they are vulnerable to exploitation and unfavorable working circumstances because unions do not adequately represent them; Hence, this study

Scope of the study

The socioeconomic circumstances, health hazards, and exploitation that women in informal textile unit face are usually the main topics of a study on the predicament of unorganized women workers in the textile sector. A lack of social security, formal job contracts, and legal protections can leave people vulnerable.

Objectives of the study

- To better understand these women workers' socioeconomic circumstances, safety concerns, and general well-being,
- To evaluate factors like fair wages, job security, safety precautions, and workplace conditions.
- To pinpoint the fundamental causes of their vulnerability and offer remedies to enhance their working circumstances and level of empowerment in the textile industry.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The research design adapted in the present study is a Descriptive Research Design. This design is found suitable because the study deals with an area, in which only a small number of researches have been conducted. Yet there is a

vast scope for further research. The proposed research is descriptive in nature rather than experimental

Universe

The study is planned to be conducted in Doddaballapur Taluk of Bengaluru Rural district in Karnataka. Women working in textile mills residing in the Doddaballapur Taluk of Bengaluru Rural district constitute the universe for the study.

Sample

Using stratified random sampling, the researcher chose 250 women workers from the entire universe.

Tools of the study

It uses a quantitative and descriptive methodology, collecting primary data from 250 women workers chosen by stratified random sampling using structured questionnaires. Chi-square tests and descriptive statistics are used in data analysis to find meaningful correlations.

Hypotheses

H₀₁: Unorganized women workers' perceptions of their working conditions (such as job security, working hours, and safety) are not significantly correlated with their age.

H₀₂: Employees' perceptions of professional options and income sufficiency are not influenced by their educational background.

H₀₃: The workers' view of help for childcare and home duties is not substantially connected with their monthly salary.

Limitations of the Study

- Due to its necessity, scope, and goals, the current study is limited. It has specific conditions as well.
- Given that there isn't recordkeeping, record-keeping, and data collection were challenging, and data for women workers was unavailable for the recent years.
- The study uses a questionnaire, and the answers provided by female employees may be causal in nature. It was unable to verify the respondents' accuracy of the information they submitted in their personal data. Additionally, the study is limited to a single district

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Unorganized women's socioeconomic status in the textile sector

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age in Years	18-25	75	30.00
	26-35	92	36.80
	36-45	58	23.20
	46 and Above	25	10.00
Marital Status	Unmarried	67	26.80
	Married	167	66.80
	Widowed/Separated	16	26.67
Qualification	Illiterate	100	40.00
	Primary Education	83	33.20
	SSLC	50	20.00
	PUC	17	6.80
Monthly Income(Rs.)	Below Rs.10,000	133	53.2
	Rs.10,001-Rs.15,000	83	33.2
	Rs.15,001-Rs.20,000	25	10.00
	Above Rs.20,000	08	3.20

Source: Primary data

The textile sector in Bengaluru Rural district has a diversified workforce, with the majority (30.0%) lying in the 18-25 age range, indicating a young workforce at the start of their careers. The second-largest group (36.8%) is between 26-35 years old, indicating that many people are in their prime working years, juggling job and family commitments. A significant proportion (23.2%) is between 36-45 years old, indicating prior expertise in the industry. Older women encounter obstacles in working in the physically demanding textile business, as only 10.0% of workers are above 46.

The majority of women employed in Bengaluru Rural district textile sector (66.8%) are married, which suggests that many of them are juggling work and home obligations, which may have an impact on their availability and work dynamics. Unmarried women make up a lower percentage of the workforce (26.8%), most typically younger or independent workers with no family responsibilities. Furthermore, just 26.67% of workers are widowed or separated, indicating that they may have different social and economic difficulties than their married peers.

40% of women employed in Bengaluru Rural district's textile sector are illiterate, which restricts their chances for improved employment options and professional growth. This indicates a substantial educational gap. A sizeable percentage (33.2%) has finished elementary school, demonstrating rudimentary literacy abilities but restricted access to higher education. There are little possibilities for

formal education in this field, as evidenced by the fact that just 20% of people have finished secondary school. Furthermore, just 6.8% of workers have completed higher secondary education or above, underscoring their generally poor educational attainment, which affects their capacity for skill development and better employment opportunities.

More than half (53.2%) of the women employed in Bengaluru Rural District 's textile industry make less than INR 10,000 a month, which is insufficient to cover their basic expenses, raising serious economic concerns. A sizeable percentage (33.2%) make between INR 10,001 and 15,000, which indicates a marginally higher income but still falls into the low-income category. A smaller group (10.0%) makes between INR 15,001 and 20,000, which is a slight increase but still quite low considering the rising cost of living. Only 3.2% of workers make more than INR 15,000, indicating a significant income gap and implying that only a tiny number of workers are paid more for their labor.

According to the data, the majority of the unorganized women employed in Bengaluru Rural District's textile sector are young, married, and have little formal education. Many of them lack literacy, which limits their opportunities for employment and economic advancement. More than half of these workers make less than INR 10,000 per month, which makes it difficult for them to cover their basic needs. These socioeconomic factors highlight the vulnerability of women employed in the textile sector and indicate the need for initiatives to address job security, income disparity, and education.

Table 2: The average and standard deviation of the textile industry's unorganized female workforce

SINo.		Average	Standard Deviation
01	I am compensated fairly for the work I do.	7.37	2.01
02	My earnings are sufficient to cover my family's basic necessities.	7.37	2.01
03	There is job security in my current employment	7.4333	1.9177
04	There are sufficient safety precautions at my place of employment.	7.4433	1.8885
05	The hours of work are realistic and fair.	7.355	2.0452
06	Supervisors and coworkers treat me with respect.	7.4333	1.9177
07	Regarding workplace dangers, I have access to appropriate medical services.	7.4333	1.9177
08	Working in the textile unit makes me feel physically secure.	7.3767	2.0192
09	I am provided with sufficient safety gear while working.	7.355	2.0268
10	I experience employment discrimination and harassment based on my gender identity.	7.4217	1.9652
11	My job outside the home is supported by my family.	7.51	1.8292
12	I am free to express my worries without fear.	7.51	1.8292
13	My job gives me the chance to pick up new abilities.	7.4433	1.8787
14	Training courses that will enhance my employment prospects are of interest to me.	7.455	1.869
15	The kind of work I receive depends on my educational background.	7.4433	1.8687
16	I am conscious of my legal rights as an employee.	7.0667	1.8695
17	I am aware of the government programs available to employees like myself.	7.2333	2.1487
18	I feel comfortable reporting workplace difficulties to authorities	7.51	1.8695
19	My employment permits me to handle family responsibilities properly.	7.21	2.1545
20	My income has improved the living conditions for my family.	7.355	1.9518
21	I have ample assistance with children and domestic tasks.	7.3667	1.9527
22	My employer provides me with any social security or welfare benefits.	7.4333	1.9177
23	My employment provides me with coverage under any health or insurance plan.	7.4433	1.9373
24	Government or NGO support programs are available to me.	7.4883	1.9285

Source: Author's Compilation

The table illustrates the generally favorable but variable experiences of unorganized women employed in the textile sector. With mean scores ranging from 7.3 to 7.5, most employees describe favorable conditions, such as fair pay, job security, and courteous treatment. A broad sense of work-life balance and professional advancement is indicated by the favorable perceptions of family support for working outside the home and chances for skill improvement.

Moderate standard deviations indicates significant variety in awareness of legal rights and access to government schemes, with some workers feeling under informed or unsupported. Although many women have fair working circumstances, there are still gaps in their experiences and understanding of available resources. This highlights the need for improved worker education and support networks.

Table 3: Age distribution of unorganized women workers in the textile industry using the chi-square test

SINo.		Value	Dof	Sig.
01	I am compensated fairly for the work I do.	21.706a	20	0.612
02	My earnings are sufficient to cover my family's basic necessities.	18.647a	20	0.855
03	There is job security in my current employment	12.66a	20	1.36
04	There are sufficient safety precautions at my place of employment.	13.285a	20	13.117
05	The hours of work are realistic and fair.	46.462 a	20	0.01
06	Supervisors and coworkers treat me with respect.	12.66a	20	1.36
07	Regarding workplace dangers, I have access to appropriate medical services.	12.493a	20	1.193
08	Working in the textile unit makes me feel physically secure.	53.775a	20	0.002
09	I am provided with sufficient safety gear while working.	41.862a	20	0.023
10	I experience employment discrimination and harassment based on my gender identity.	37.963a	20	0.05
11	My job outside the home is supported by my family.	25.168a	20	0.357
12	I am free to express my worries without fear.	25.017a	20	0.402
13	My job gives me the chance to pick up new abilities.	51.382a	20	0.003
14	Training courses that will enhance my employment prospects are of interest to me.	38.532a	20	0.045
15	The kind of work I receive depends on my educational background.	17.355a	20	0.967
16	I am conscious of my legal rights as an employee.	25.267a	20	0.388
17	I am aware of the government programs available to employees like myself.is	14.763a	20	1.192
18	I feel comfortable reporting workplace difficulties to authorities	20.29a	20	0.74
19	My employment permits me to handle family responsibilities properly.	26.633a	20	0.32
20	My income has improved the living conditions for my family.	16.607a	20	1.032
21	I have ample assistance with children and domestic tasks.	15.697a	20	1.112
22	My employer provides me with any social security or welfare benefits.	24.422a	20	0.435
23	My employment provides me with coverage under any health or insurance plan.	11.02a	20	1.47
24	Government or NGO support programs are available to me.	27.898a	20	0.267

Source: Author’s Compilation

The results of the Chi-square test show that, in certain places, age has an impact on how people view unorganized women workers in the textile sector. In particular, notable variations were discovered in the ways that age influences opinions regarding working hours, physical safety, availability of protective gear, encounters with gender discrimination, and chances for skill improvement. Certain results imply that different age groups may have varied

perspectives on certain elements of their workplace. However, there are no discernible age-related differences in elements like fair pay, work security, family support, and knowledge of legal rights, suggesting that these characteristics are generally constant across all age groups. As a result, while some working circumstances seem to change with age, many others are largely consistent across age groups.

Table 4: Chi-square analysis of unorganized women workers' educational backgrounds in the textile sector

SINo.		Value	Dof	Sig.
01	I am compensated fairly for the work I do.	28.38a	20	0.248
02	My earnings are sufficient to cover my family's basic necessities.	27.195a	20	0.295
03	There is job security in my current employment	20.213a	20	0.725
04	There are sufficient safety precautions at my place of employment.	22.282a	20	0.568
05	The hours of work are realistic and fair.	5.507a	20	1.655
06	Supervisors and coworkers treat me with respect.	21.453a	20	0.63
07	Regarding workplace dangers, I have access to appropriate medical services.	21.453a	20	0.63
08	Working in the textile unit makes me feel physically secure.	10.067a	20	1.523
09	I am provided with sufficient safety gear while working.	12.002a	20	1.401
10	I experience employment discrimination and harassment based on my gender identity.	12.315a	20	1.385
11	My job outside the home is supported by my family.	22.608a	20	1.072
12	I am free to express my worries without fear.	16.148a	20	1.072
13	My job gives me the chance to pick up new abilities.	17.562a	20	0.948
14	Training courses that will enhance my employment prospects are of interest to me.	16.013a	20	1.083
15	The kind of work I receive depends on my educational background.	21.787a	20	0.607
16	I am conscious of my legal rights as an employee.	14.142a	20	1.243
17	I am aware of the government programs available to employees like myself.is	19.933a	20	0.748
18	I feel comfortable reporting workplace difficulties to authorities	17.685a	20	0.938
19	My employment permits me to handle family responsibilities properly.	30.053a	20	0.192
20	My income has improved the living conditions for my family.	13.28a	20	1.313
21	I have ample assistance with children and domestic tasks.	21.733a	20	0.61
22	My employer provides me with any social security or welfare benefits.	16.005a	20	1.085
23	My employment provides me with coverage under any health or insurance plan.	13.692a	20	1.28
24	Government or NGO support programs are available to me.	25.292a	20	0.387

Source: Author’s Compilation

The findings of the Chi-square test regarding the educational backgrounds of unorganized women employees

in the textile sector indicate that the majority of their experiences at work are not significantly impacted by

education level. The majority of assertions, such as fair compensation, income sufficiency, job security, safety measures, and work conditions, have p-values above 0.05, suggesting that workers' judgments of these aspects are not significantly impacted by their level of education. Perceptions of respect, safety, fair pay, and chances for skill development, for instance, all exhibit non-significant findings (p-values above 0.05). Furthermore, there are no appreciable variations based on education level in

employees' knowledge of their legal rights, access to government programs, and confidence in reporting workplace problems. The p-values for work-life balance and family circumstances are marginally lower but still over 0.05, indicating that there is no discernible pattern of educational influence on these variables. Overall, the findings show that employees' opinions and experiences at work are not greatly influenced by their educational background.

Table 5: Chi-square analysis of the monthly earnings of unorganized women employed in the textile sector

SINo.		Value	Dof	Sig.
01	I am compensated fairly for the work I do.	22.597a	27	1.053
02	My earnings are sufficient to cover my family's basic necessities.	20.26a	27	1.222
03	There is job security in my current employment	41.24a	27	1.233
04	There are sufficient safety precautions at my place of employment.	24.592a	27	0.902
05	The hours of work are realistic and fair.	42.625a	27	0.1
06	Supervisors and coworkers treat me with respect.	22.815a	27	1.037
07	Regarding workplace dangers, I have access to appropriate medical services.	23.31a	27	1.163
08	Working in the textile unit makes me feel physically secure.	37.76a	27	0.205
09	I am provided with sufficient safety gear while working.	36.597a	27	0.242
10	I experience employment discrimination and harassment based on my gender identity.	22.235a	27	1.08
11	My job outside the home is supported by my family.	21.302a	27	1.148
12	I am free to express my worries without fear.	21.302a	27	1.148
13	My job gives me the chance to pick up new abilities.	16.797a	27	1.438
14	Training courses that will enhance my employment prospects are of interest to me.	20.803a	27	1.183
15	The kind of work I receive depends on my educational background.	26.102a	27	0.795
16	I am conscious of my legal rights as an employee.	22.188a	27	1.083
17	I am aware of the government programs available to employees like myself.is	20.457a	27	1.208
18	I feel comfortable reporting workplace difficulties to authorities	23.733a	27	0.968
19	My employment permits me to handle family responsibilities properly.	23.495a	27	0.985
20	My income has improved the living conditions for my family.	27.108a	27	0.725
21	I have ample assistance with children and domestic tasks.	44.397a	27	0.077
22	My employer provides me with any social security or welfare benefits.	26.483a	27	0.768
23	My employment provides me with coverage under any health or insurance plan.	19.595a	27	1.268
24	Government or NGO support programs are available to me.	22.265a	27	1.077

Source: Author's Compilation

The findings of the Chi-square test for the monthly income of unorganized women workers in the textile sector indicate that there isn't much of a correlation between their pay and different aspects of their jobs. With the majority of p-values above the 0.05 cutoff, there are no discernible variations in how women who earn varying amounts of money have varied opinions about their workplace. Examples of non-significant results (p-values above 0.05) include perceptions of fair pay, job stability, safety precautions, supervisor respect, and access to healthcare, and chances for skill development. With a p-value of 0.046, the one noteworthy exception is sufficient support for childcare and housework, suggesting that there is a substantial correlation between monthly income and the availability of such support. It implies that women with greater wages could believe they have better assistance in handling household chores and childcare. With the exception of assistance with childcare and housework, the results generally imply that salary has little bearing on employees' opinions on the majority of job circumstances.

Suggestions

- Women workers need skill development programs to improve their skill level because they are under skilled.
- Women employees should receive education and awareness about their legal rights and provisions.

In order to defend their rights, women workers must be made aware of the institutional support that is available to

them.

It takes a complete statute to safeguard the rights of female employees.

- Sexual harassment of female employees and other forms of exploitation must be stopped, and those who engage in such behavior must face severe consequences.
- The social message on women's equality should be disseminated through the media.
- Every organization sector should have a dedicated women's grievance cell led by a woman. In the case of the unorganized sector, women should create self-help groups for their own safety.
- Labor laws must undergo the necessary revisions.
- The unorganized sector should be properly regulated to guarantee job security, a healthy workplace, at least minimum salaries, and benefits for maternity and child care.

Future Research Directions

There is a great deal of need for research on the predicament of unorganized women workers in Bengaluru Rural District's textile and apparel sector, especially as the sector moves from the city center to semi-urban areas. The relationship between caste and gender, health vulnerabilities, the effects of fast fashion, and the "industrial

afterlife" of workers are important topics for further study. The following themes and research gaps need further attention: 1. Informalization and spatial shift (semi-urban context) 2. Occupational Health and "Production Torture" 3. Family Debt and Socioeconomic Risk 4. The "Industrial Afterlife" and Life after Manufacturing

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