

## **SOCIAL AND POLITICAL, CHALLENGES FACE BY INFORMAL WORKERS IN INDIA: AN OVER VIEW**

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**Abstract:** *In this age of globalization rapid changes are taking place in social political, industrial and cultural aspects. There occurs massive restructuring of work, employment and industry. Identity and aspirations shift swiftly. The knowledge revolution is taking place. Technologies change in an un-imaginable speed. All these developments caused an increase in the women workforce participation all over the world and also in India. India's workforce comprises nearly 93 per cent in the unorganized segment, with the entire farm sector falling under the informal category, while only one-fifth of the non-farm workers are found in the organized segment. It is widely acknowledged that the informal sector in India suffers from a low productivity syndrome, compared to the formal sector. Poor human capital base (in terms of education, skill and training) as well as lower mobilization status of the work force further add to the vulnerability and weaken the bargaining strength of workers in the informal sector.*

*The alarming expansion of informal sector, in recent times, and increasing feminization of employment in this sector has adversely affected employment and income security for the larger majority of the workforce in general and women in particular, along with a marked reduction in the scale of social welfare security programme. Therefore, this analysis makes an effect of globalisation on developments in the women workforce participation in India.*

**Key Words:** *Informal sector, Labour rights in India, Social protection, Political representation*

### **OBJECTIVES**

The main objectives of the paper are as follows:

- To know the challenges of informal employment in India
- To analyse the problems and prospects of women in informal sector
- To give the suitable suggestions for improve the working of informal s

### **Methodology**

This paper based on secondary date and theory critically examines the challenges of informal employment in India. It is collected from books, journals, Census report, NSS reports and articles. The paper exposes the problems and prospects of informal employment in the Country.

### **Analysis and Discussion**

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the challenges of women working in informal sector in generation of employment opportunities and livelihood. Further, it discusses the different dimensions of informal employment in India.

#### **Developments in women workforce participation**

The entry of women in the occupational field is of great social significance, from the advantage of enlarging vision, widening her outlook and developing her social personality. In ancient period, women have a greater freedom in various fields and in later period the status of women gradually declined. During the 19th century, it was considered derogatory for women to take to outside the word as a means of earning even though she had no other means of subsistence. Women are confined to take up jobs mainly due to economic necessity. The British Govt. is said to have been largely responsible for initiation modernization efforts within the country. Social reform and access to education initiated by various Indian leaders and influenced and aided by the British Govt. paved the path for increased participation of women on various platforms- political, social and economic. After independence India adopted the constitution in 1950. It provides the guidelines for India's future development mainly through its Directive Principles of State policy. By making a number of welfares activates mandatory for state and private organizations through legislations. These documents could be considered to be India's first formal attempt to address work and family matters. Notable legislation was passed around the times that have had a special bearing on women workforce participation in India.

In mid 1980s & 1990s, as the number of urban educated women aspiring for job increased, and as the strength of marriage as a universal and ubiquitous institution within India continued unabated, there was a rise in the number of working couples in urban settings.

#### **Work force participation literacy and population growth**

As per census 2011, India's working population constitute 32% of the working population. Majority of working women are crowded in the unorganized sector. As per Country report, presented at the 4th world conference on women in Beijing in 1995, only 4% of all the working women are in the organized sector. This means that only about 0.005% of India's population comprises of working women in the organized workforce. A Comparative statistical profile relating to women workforce participation in India is shown in table 1.

**Table 1.1 Work Force Participation Rates**

Work Force Participation Rate		1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	2021
Total	Persons	34.2	36.7	37.7	39.3	-	38.3
	Male	52.8	52.6	51.6	51.9	-	50.2
	Female	14.2	19.7	22.7	25.7	-	18.4
Rural	Persons	35.3	38.8	40.2	42	-	-
	Male	53.8	53.8	52.5	52.4	55	53.2

	Female	25.9	23.1	27.2	31	31	28.3
Urban	Persons	29.6	30	30.4	32.2	-	-
	Male	48.9	49.1	49	50.9	54	47.6
	Female	7.2	8.3	9.7	11.6	14	5.4

Source: Computed

This means that only about 0.005% of India's population comprises of working women in the organized workforce. A Comparative statistical profile relating to women workforce participation in India is shown in table 1.1. Table 5.1 reveals that the total women at participation rate increased from 14.2 per cent in 1971 to 25.7 percent in 2001. The rate of rural women at work and urban women at work rate are also showing an increasing trend over the years. Among the total women workers, rural women participation at work is more compared with urban women. The workforce participation of women in urban areas is a mere 14 per cent as compared to 54 per cent for men. In rural areas, it is 31 per cent for women, where as it is 55 per cent for men. Several factors are affecting either positively or negatively on work participation rate of women. Patriarchal tradition, influence of family, religious conservatism, economic condition, education, caste, status, etc are some factors which effects on women work participation rate. Another impediment of women labour participation is the immobility of labour.

**Table 1.2 Sex wise growth of population**

<b>Population (Millions)</b>	<b>1951</b>	<b>1961</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Total</b>	361.09	439.23	548.16	683.33	846.3	1027.02	1210.19
<b>Male</b>	185.55	226.29	284.02	353.32	439.18	531.28	623.72
<b>Female</b>	175.53	212.94	264.14	330	407.12	495.74	586.49
<b>Sex-Ratio</b>	946	941	930	934	927	933	940

Source: Computed

**Table 1.3 Literacy rates of population**

<b>Literacy (%)</b>	<b>1951</b>	<b>1961</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2011</b>
Total	18.3	28.3	34.5	43.6	52.2	65.4	74.04
Male	27.2	40.4	46.0	56.4	64.1	75.9	82.14
Female	8.9	15.4	22	29.8	39.3	54.2	65.46

Source: Computed

The census survey of India 2011 indicates that there are 940 women for every 1000 men in the country, making the female population in about 48.46 per cent of the total population. The demographic changes of India are depicted in table 1.2.

Table 1.2 shows the sex wise growth of population, sex ratio and Table 3 shows literacy rates. The total population of the country has been increased substantially from 361.09 million in 1951 to 1210.19 million in 2011 census. The figures of 2011 census reveals a decline in the rate of growth of population from 21.54 per cent in 1991-2001 to 17.64 per cent in 2001-2011 census decades. Table also reveals that the women population has substantially increased over the years, whereas, female growth rate and the sex ratios are showing a declining trend. The overall literacy rate has increased from about 18.3 per cent in 1951 to about 74.4 per cent in 2011. Women literacy rate has also increased considerably over the years. The female literacy rate has showing an increasing trend of 8.9 per cent in 1951 to 65.46 per cent in 2011. Even through the literacy rate has increased over the years, the male female gap has not narrowed.

### **Women's employment in the Unorganized Sector in India**

The Indian economy is characterized by the existence of a vast majority of informal or unorganized labor employment. As per a survey carried out by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) in 2009–10, the total employment in the country was of 46.5 crore comprising around 2.8 crore in the organized and the remaining 43.7 crore workers in the unorganized sector. Out of these workers in the unorganized sector, there are 24.6 crore workers employed in agricultural sector, about 4.4 crore in construction work and remaining in manufacturing and service. As per the Economic Survey 2007-08, 93% of India's workforce include the self-employment Labour, Government of India, has categorized the unorganized labour force under four groups in terms of Occupation, nature of employment, especially distressed categories and service categories. In addition to these four categories, there exists a large section of unorganized labour force such as cobblers, Hamals, Handicraft artisans, Handloom weavers, Lady Tailors, Physically handicapped self-employed persons, Rickshaw pullers, Auto drivers, Sericulture workers, Carpenters, Tannery workers, Power loom workers and urban poor.

Though the availability of statistical information on intensity and accuracy vary significantly, the extent of unorganized workers is significantly high among agricultural workers, building and other construction workers and among home-based workers. According to the Economic Survey 2007-08 agricultural workers constitute the largest segment of workers in the unorganized sector (ie. 52% of the total workers. The NSSO Report of May 2011 about the casual workers in India between 2004-05 and 2009-10 compared to that of the period between 1999 –2000 and 2004-05 very clearly shows that there is significant increase in the number of casual workers and decline in the number of regular workers. This report shows a substantial shift between 1999-00 and 2009-10 in the structure of the labour force which can be broadly divided in to self-employed, regular, and casual workers. (Casual workers are employees who do not enjoy the same benefits and security as tenured employees. All daily wage employees and some categories of contract employees are casual labourers.) The percentage of women employment in the organized sector is considerably less than the un-organized sector. Lack of education is one of the hindering factors

to gain productive and remunerative employment. The agricultural workers have the lowest level of education. In un-organized sector, they work in various capacity-attached, bonded, casual, contract labour, workers in sweated industries like construction work, hand and power looms, bidi & cigar making, stone cutting, dhal and rice milling, pottery, crafts, match working, wooden work etc. The women employment in the Organized Sector in India is depicted in table 1.4

**Table 1.4 Women Employment in Organized Sector in India**

Sectors		1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2006
Public Sector	Total	194.7	194.3	195.6	194.2	194.2	193.1	191.4	-
	Male	168.7	167.9	168.3	166.6	166	164.6	162.8	-
	Female	26.0	26.4	27.3	27.6	28.1	28.6	28.6	30.03
	Total	80.6	85.1	86.9	87.5	87	86.5	86.5	-
Private Sector	Male	64.3	67.2	67.8	67.4	66.8	65.8	65.6	-
	Female	16.3	17.9	19.1	20.1	20.2	20.7	20.9	21.18
Total	Total	275.3	279.4	282.5	271.7	281.1	279.6	277.9	-
	Male	233	235.1	236.1	233.9	232.8	230.4	228.4	-
	Female	42.3	44.3	46.4	47.7	48.3	49.2	49.5	51.21

**Source:** computed

Table 1.4 indicates that out of the total number of women employed in organized sector in India, women employment in the public sector is more than the private sector. The women employment in the public sector has been increased from 26.00 lakhs in 1995 to 30.03 lakhs in 2006, and also increased substantially in private sector from 16.30 lakhs in 1995 to 21.18 lakhs in 2006. The increase in the employment in private sector may be due to the growth of IT, ITES and BT industries. During this period these industries have adopted modern work styles, and family friendly measures, attracted women towards these industries. The women employment in organized sector by industry division is shown in table 1.5.

**Table 1.5 Women Employment in Organised Sector by Industry Division (Thousands)**

Industry Divisions	1981		1991		1996		2000		2006
	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Women

Agr. Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	1321	456 (34.5)	1447	498 (34.4)	1459	479(32.8)	1418	542(38.2)	496.56
Mining & Quarrying	948	87(9.2)	1099	79(7.2)	1100	81(7.4)	1005	65(6.5)	84.46
Manufacturing	6047	595 (9.8)	6333	597(9.4)	6787	876(12.9)	6616	1023(15.5)	890.39
Electricity Gas & Water	718	17 (2.4)	945	31(3.3)	988	38(3.8)	987	46(4.6)	52.54
Construction	1161	59(5.1)	1222	61(5.0)	1212	65(5.4)	1149	68(5.9)	65.53
Wholesale & Retail Trade, Restaurant and hotel	394	21 (5.2)	450	34(7.6)	479	41(8.5)	593	45(9.1)	48.50
Transport, Storage & Communication	2769	82(2.9)	3079	140(4.5)	3152	162(5.1)	3147	180(5.7)	190.67
Financial, Insurance & Real Estate	944	80 (8.4)	1448	174(12.0)	1586	208(13.1)	1654	232(14.0)	329.82
Community, Personal & Social Services	8577	1397(16.3)	10712	2167(20.2)	11178	2476(22.2)	11494	2750(23.9)	729.30
<b>Total</b>	<b>2289</b>	<b>2793(12.2)</b>	<b>26735</b>	<b>3781(14)</b>	<b>27941</b>	<b>4426(158)</b>	<b>2793</b>	<b>4960(177)</b>	

**Source:** Computed

Table 1.5 Shows that women employment in organized sector by industry division has shown an increasing trend in all the divisions of employment, women are employed the most in community; personal and social services, in the public sector, while they have the highest percentage of employment in the manufacturing sector followed by agriculture. Almost 400 million people (more than 85% of the working population in India) work in unorganized sector and of these about 120 million are women. According to an estimate, by the National Commission on Self-Employed Women (1988a), of the total number of women workers in India, about 94 percent are in the informal or unorganized sector whereas just 6 percent are in the organized or formal sector.

### **Impact of Globalisation of female work force participation in IT Sector**

The entire world is moving ahead to meet the challenges of globalization, which in turn has compelled us to come to gather on a common platform at the provincial, national and international levels, making issues of participatory democracy a part of the ongoing struggles. After 1990, India became connected to a fast globalizing world. Especially during 1995-2000 India saw Information technology enables service (ITES) e.g. call centre and software sector boom. Many organizations in this sector adopted work styles and organization practices from developed countries in the west. The IT sector was meant to have emancipator potential for working women. The IT industries have been offering family friendly measures. All these developments created new job avenues to women.

Women Employment in India during 1971 to 2011 is studied with the help of exponential growth rate mode. Time series data for 1971 to 2011 was used to study growth rates in Women Work Force Participation; Women Employment in India, an exponential growth model issued.

**Table 1.6 Growth rate of Women Work Force Participation, Women Employment in India**

<b>Items</b>	<b>Growth rate (r) 1971 to 2011</b>
Women Work Force Participation	14.08* (3.45)
Women Employment	18.96* (4.57)

**Source:** Computed

**Note:** \* significant at 1 per cent level

A keen observation of data in table 1.6 reveals that the annual growth rate of women work force participation in India is worked out 14.08 per cent and the annual growth rate of women employment in India is worked out to 18.96 per cent. Therefore, there is a significant annual growth rate of Women Work Force Participation, Women Employment in India during 1971 to 2011.

### **Growth of unorganised sector women's employment, industry, agriculture and service sector in India:**

A woman is identified as a mother, a wife, a daughter-in-law or a daughter but never as an independent person. To be born as a woman means to inhabit, from early infancy to the last day of life, a psychological world that differs from the world of the man. Much of the exasperation and discrimination in woman's life stems from this fact. The overall picture is one of greater disadvantage for women workers in general and those belonging to unorganized sector in particular. As a matter of fact, the problem of female worker is the index of the status of Indian labour in both organized and unorganized sectors. Any discussion regarding the problems associated with the women labour has many aspects, such as economic, political, psychological, sociological and legal etc. The employment in the organized sector requires certain minimum qualifications and most of these educated women workers are drawn from middle classes and richer sections, a very few women from lower class would get chance in these jobs.

The National Commission on Labour describes some characteristics and constraints of unorganized sector, namely: (a) casual nature of employment; (b) ignorance and illiteracy; (c) small size of establishment with low capital investment per person employed; (d) scattered nature of establishments; and (e) superior strength of the employers operating singly and in combination. Therefore, this analysis makes the growth of unorganized women employment in industry, agriculture and service sector in India.

### **Projected employment in agriculture, industry and service**

Almost 400 million people (more than 85% of the working population in India) work in unorganized sector and of these about 120 million are women. According to an estimate, by the National Commission on Self-Employed Women (1988a), of the total number of women workers in India, about 94 percent are in the informal or unorganized sector whereas just 6 percent are in the organized or formal sector. Thus there is no exaggeration in saying that the unorganized sector in India is the women's sector. However, the plight of women in this sector is miserable as they work for extremely low wages, with a total lack of job security and social security benefits, working hours are long and working conditions are unsatisfactory. According to census 2011, women constitute 48.46 percent of the total population in India and about 25.67 percent of female population is designated as workers. Two National Labour Commissions, along with several other international and national commissions, committees and conferences in the last 50 years have documented the socio-economic conditions of workers in the unorganized sector in India.

The Arjun Sengupta Committee report is a stark reminder of the huge size and poor conditions in this sector. The National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS), has extensively profiled the unorganized sector and unorganized employment in its report, „The Challenges of Employment in India-An Informal Economy Perspective“ (April, 2009) and suggested the measures that are considered necessary for enhancing competitiveness of the unorganized sector in the emerging global environment and generation of large scale employment opportunities on sustainable basis. The most significant finding is that the economy will experience a greater degree of in formalization of employment that will increase the already high share of informal workers from 91.8% to 93.9% by 2016-17(Table 1.7).

**Table 1.7 Projected employments in agriculture, industry and services**

Year	GDP growth rates	Projected employment in million			Total
		Agriculture	Industry	service	
2011-12	9%	229.2	105.0	153.5	487.7
	7%	225.4	102.0	149.0	476.4
	5%	221.5	99.1	144.6	465.2
2016-17	9%	240.2	126.2	189.5	555.9
	7%	232.0	116.8	174.8	523.5
	5%	224.0	108.1	161.2	493.3

**Source:** computed

### **Important features of unorganized sector**

The most important features of unorganized sector are that most of the women labourers are appointed as contract labourers. Studies conducted in several parts of the country indicate the awful conditions of the women workers in this sector. They continue to face discrimination and

marginalization both subtle and blatant and do not share the fruits of development equally. Ignorance, traditional bound attitudes, illiteracy, lack of skills, seasonal nature of employment, heavy physical work of different types, lack of job security, lack of a comprehensive legislation to cover these workers in unorganized sector and competition in employment are resultant deprivation of real wage. Wages in the unorganized sector are arbitrarily fixed, often without regard to the minimum wage legislations, which adversely affect the income of the wage workers in general, and women workers in particular. In the informal sector, wage workers constituted 36% and the remaining 64% were self-employed. Average wage of men and women workers are Rs. 75 and Rs. 45 respectively which is much less than the wage of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (MGNREGP) i.e. Rs.100. Another dimension of this wage result shows the existence of gender bias in unorganized sector in terms of wage level.

The major problems they face are poverty, lack of access to education and inadequate healthcare facilities. Living in abject poverty, most workers in the unorganized sector barely manage a subsistence existence. The rising costs of private healthcare and the systematic dismantling of the public health system in these times of liberalization are a major reason for the huge indebtedness of households in the unorganized sector. It is not that there are no statutory provisions to ensure fair working conditions for women in India.

In fact, the Constitution of India provides equal rights and opportunities to both the genders. In addition, there are specific provisions for protection and welfare of working women in many of the labour laws. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is a major step in the direction of providing security of employment to rural workers. One of the successes of MGNREGA is that, on average the participation of women in the programme is higher than the stipulated minimum requirement of 30%. Women constitute 46% of the beneficiaries in 2007-08. Although the Government is seized of the situation, yet it continues to remain a problem area due to non-availability of reliable statistical data and other information pertaining to working, living and socio-economic conditions of women workers. The first enquiry for studying socio-economic conditions of women worker was undertaken by Labour Bureau in the year 1953 and a report titled “The Economic and Social Status of Women Workers in India” was brought out.

### **Issues and Challenges**

Studies conducted in several parts of the country indicate the awful conditions of the women workers in these sectors. The women workers face a number of difficulties such as, in many cases, they are not considered as workers which make their income very low when linked to the earnings of the male workers. Often, they are considered as workers which are out-of-date and low skilled according to the requirements of the market. They also have to take care of their children at home and at the same time have to work to support their families. In fact, they are doing double the amount of work and paid less than half when compared with their male counter parts. The women who are engaged in domestic work and street vending face difficulties such as sexual harassment and abusive language. Domestic workers have to work in three to five houses per day without any bonus or overtime. They face sexual harassment and many a times their working conditions are

very bad. Migrant domestic workers face such difficulties in a more intense manner. Sometimes the recruiting agents compel the women to engage in sex work. Also they are paid very less and due to the lack of bargaining power, they are not in a position to demand more. They are replaced frequently, in case of better wage demands, as they are in surplus in the market. Research shows that women and girls, who tend to work harder than men, are more likely to invest their earnings in their children.

### **Conditions of women working in the Informal sector in India**

All over the globe the contribution of women in economic development of the country is significant. In every aspect, the role the women is *sine qua non* in the socio economic life of the country. But, the majority of women work in the unorganized sector for low wages and at low levels of skills. The number of women workers during last four decades has more than doubled from 40 million to 90 million. Out of 407 million total work force, 90 million are women workers largely employed (about 87 per cent) in the agricultural sector as workers and cultivators. In a developing country like India, the women workers in the unorganized sectors work in terrible conditions which not only affect their social status but hamper their income, health and other aspects. Therefore, this analysis makes the conditions of women working in the unorganized sector in India.

### **Terrible conditions of women workers in the unorganized sectors**

In a study conducted by the International Labour Organization about four decades back it could be established that 27 out of 100 women were found to be economically active and about one third of the world's labour force comprised of women. At the same time it was also highlighted that participation of the women in economic activity varies considerably from one region to another due to varying economic, social and cultural conditions prevailing in each region. It was well established that the rate of participation by women in economic life varies from a maximum of a more than 40 per cent in Eastern Europe and the USSR where women force constitute more than two-fifth of the total work force on the one hand to that of minimum of less than 15 per cent in Latin America where women could constitute only one-fifth of the total labour force.

At the same time participation of women in labour force was also found to be high in Western Europe where women comprised one third of the economically active population and most of them were found to be gainfully employed in all age groups. In some of the developed countries like Denmark, Germany, Japan, Australia, etc, a major part of women labour force is engaged in agriculture and their participation is also high in non-agricultural activities. And on the whole overall rate of participation of women labour force in these countries tends to be higher as compared to other developed countries. It has been observed with regard to developing countries that one group of countries, namely, Haiti, Nepal, Thailand etc., rate of women participation in economic life exceeds 40 per cent of the total female population while in other group of countries, namely, India, Malaya, Morocco, Tunisia, etc, the rate of women's participation is comparatively less in the range of 30 to 40 per cent of the total agricultural work force and between 20 to 25 per cent of the total female population.

### **Unemployment for the working women in informal sector**

In most of the developing countries wide spread unemployment and under-employment pose varied problems for the working women. In order to understand diversity involved in this regard it becomes imperative to study each specific case in the context of existing plan and the complexities involved in respect of prevailing unemployment and underemployment among the women workers. Leaving apart agriculture, in other sectors of employment the women workers have to face the competition with the men workers and due to that the women workers are deprived of work opportunities, particularly, in the modernized industries and at the same time mechanization of small industries has also resulted in replacement of women workers by their male counterparts and due to these reasons majority of the women workers continue to get employment in rural sectors of employment. One peculiar feature which is common in majority of developing countries has been that women seek employment without having vocational qualifications which might not be having direct nexus to the existing needs of national economic problems and the aspect of social development. All these factors necessitate for the State, particularly in the developing countries to provide vocational training to the women seeking employment so as to ensure optimum scope for their employment.

Laboring women in the informal sector are an important segment on the labour force in India. According to an estimate of the National Commission of Self Employment of women, 94% of the total female work force operates in the unorganized sector. They do arduous work as wage earners, piece rate workers, casual labour and paid family labour. The coverage of labour laws has not benefited these women workers in many areas of wages, working conditions, maternity benefits and social security

### **Range of occupations in the informal sector on women**

The Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi has made several studies in a wide range of occupations in the unorganized sector on women. Studies which were conducted in the various parts of the country reveals the awful conditions of the women labourers in the unorganized sector. It has been observed that a significant percentage of the jobs in this sector are managed by women drawn from lower caste and lower class women. Ignorance, tradition bound attitudes, illiteracy, lack of skills, seasonal nature of employment, heavy physical work of different types, long hours of work with limited payment, discrimination in wage structures of men and women, lack of guarantee of minimum wage, lack of job security, lack of comprehensive legislation to cover these labourers in unorganized informal sector, lack of minimum facilities at the work-site, ill-treatment, migration and disintegration of families of the employment women in this sector.

Women's 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.

Women work mainly for economic independence, for economic necessity, as some women are qualified enough to work. Most Indian women by and large under-take “productive work” only under economic compulsion, this is the reason for high female participation rates in economically under privileged communities. Usually up-per class women are limited to homes. Work participation rate is found to be higher among rural women (27%) than the urban women (10%). women usually go in for temporary and standby jobs because of the prevalent hesitancy to employ women in regular jobs and providing them with good working conditions. 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 percent.

Female marginal workers constitute 6.26% of the population, whereas males being only 0.98%.<sup>9</sup>In 2005, for the first time, agriculture was no longer the main sector of employment for women and this trend continued in 2006. The service sector now provides most jobs for women. Of the total number of employed women in 2006, 40.4 per cent work in agriculture and 42.4 per cent in services. Most of the women are found to be employed in agricultural activities and in the unorganized sector. The employment of women is high in the informal sector such as part time helpers in households, construction center, tanneries (setting, parting and drying), match and beedi industries etc. An estimate by 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 majority of Indians work in Agriculture where 55% of the population is female agricultural workers and 30% of the men are labourers and not cultivators.

### **Conclusion**

It is observed that the overall literacy rate has increased and the workforce participation has risen over the years, the male female gap has not narrowed. There are many open openings and opportunities emerged in various organized and un-organized sectors due to globalization. Lack of proper education is the hindering factor. Indian women have to be given modern education and professional skills. The experiences of professional women in most of the developing countries indicate that the problems faced by them are essentially the same. The issues are tuned towards in equality, gender representation and social justice. In India the problems faced by women are the same. The governments have to implement suitable policies to effectively address gender disparities and to bring social justice. In a fast-developing country like India, progress and development do not confine to increase in production, health and social welfare alone. We cannot have any major development by marginalizing the majority of educated women with professional skills. The first step in national development is to recognize their merit and their contribution. Women should really feel proud of their accomplishments and status in the society. Further, the annual growth rate of women work force participation in India is worked out 14.08 per cent and the annual growth rate of women employment in India is worked out to 18.96 per cent. Therefore, there is a significant annual growth rate of Women Work Force Participation, Women Employment in India during 1971 to 2011. Further, it is observed that no doubt, there are laws to protect women and prevent exploitation but these laws (the Interstate Migrant Workmen Regulation of

Employment and Conditions of Service Act, 1979, The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 and Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 etc.), and legislations are not practically and strictly implemented. The very vastness of the country, the scattered nature of women workers, their lack of education and legal literacy, the indifferent attitude of the government-bureaucracy and the general status of women in society caused vulnerability to women. It is the need of the hour that government and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) must come forward to actively and efficiently deal with the plight of these women. Therefore, a credible employment strategy needs to focus to enhance educational level of the workers, social status of workers including women, specific industries that can absorb a higher proportion of males and females and creation of quality job.

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