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Employment of Women in Informal Sector in India- A Macro Perspective**HarleenKaur * & Gunjan Munjal****

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Abstract

The organized (formal) sector and the unorganized (Informal) sector are the two inseparable facets of the economy of India. The informal economy refers to those economic activities which are off-limits to the state's legal framework regulation and protection. From domestic workers to labor, garment workers, vendors and sales girls, women are engaged extensively in different areas in informal sector. While Women are predominantly employed in the informal sector but at the same time their employment is weighed down by various issues and problems. Informal sector is hallmarked by glaring lack of service rules and regulations, wage rules and opportunities for career progression. As reported by International Labor Organization Participation of women in informal sector has declined over the years in India from 34.1 per cent in 1999-00 to 27.2 per cent in 2011-12. There are complex sociological and economic factors at which heavily impact the fall in rate of women's employment. Women face many barriers that include access to decent employment, types of assigned work, challenging working conditions, issues with employment security, gender bias, income inequality, risk of exploitation and discrimination. The lack of education and training programs, skills enhancement, inaccessibility to safe transportation and child and maternity care impact the employment adversely. Thus, unfortunately fifty percent of the India's population contributes to less than half of the national income. This further weakens the possibility of the women's economic independence and equivalence. There is massive call for the political will; policies and legal frameworks can help bridge the gap and alleviate the problems faced by women.

Keywords: Informal sector, women's employment, International Labor Organization, Economic Independence, Barriers