

A Study on Women Employment in the Organised Sector – with special reference to Karnataka (1990-2010)

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“You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women”

– Jawaharlal Nehru

It is well known that economic growth is associated with sectoral transformation of labour. The progressive shift of workforce away from the primary sector to the secondary sector and then onto the tertiary sector is well documented. It is equally well known that Indian economic growth since independence has not borne out this sectoral transformation. It would bring about a much needed structural balance in the economy, in the interest of a sustained and higher employment growth rate. A comparison of the employment pattern between public sector and private sector manufacturing indicates that the share of public sector manufacturing employment in the total organised manufacturing employment has risen. Almost the entire increase in organised manufacturing employment that took place in the 1990s can, therefore, be attributed to the private sector. The post-reform period witnessed a remarkable growth not only in the manufacturing sector but also in the services sector, especially since 1995-96. It is observed that employment of women in the organized sector has been improving over the years. Yet, women constitute an extremely small proportion of the total organized employment to this day. Social pressures, occupational constraints, lack of proper education and training, restrictions to work are some of the reasons for their low share in total organised sector employment. This study is based on secondary data from the Ministry of Labour & Employment, Statistical Profile on Women Labour, Labour Bureau, GOI etc. Attempts have been made to reflect on the extent of women employment with respect to zone, sector and industry. The impact of independent variables like female literacy, sex ratio, FWPR, SDP etc. on women employment in the case of India and Karnataka has been analysed.