

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

In the history of human development, both men and women have always worked for their existence. However, there have been differences in the areas of work, the location of work, execution and performance, tools and technology and motivating factors for work. In Indian tradition since the inception of society woman has been treated with great honour and dignity, though occasionally we do find derogatory references to woman (Khanday, Shah, Mir, & Rasool, 2015). She is the pioneer for the transformation of organizations and society. It is well known fact that women have always contributed to the nation's economy (Ibid). In fact, women have been as vital in the history making as men have been (Kumari, 2014). Undoubtedly, without the active participation of women in national activities, the social, economical or political progress of a country will decline and become inert.

Historically, women, in addition to meeting their domestic responsibilities, they have earned income for families by producing home-made goods at home during leisure time for their sale in the market (FAO, 2011). The new thing in the twentieth century is the increasing proportion of women working away from their homes. Women workers play a necessary and important role in the economic structure of our country and have done so throughout its history but their efforts and accomplishments have not been recognized (UN, 2011). Women have always been invisible workers. Their labour and skills have been considered insignificant in relation to those of men. In case of rural India, women almost have worked with other members in the family on the farms, which were far away from their homes. In pre-industrial society the familial, social and economical roles were welded together. The family has been the basic unit of agriculture production wherein all family members were part of it. Both the sexes participated in the work team. In this system, biological reproduction and social means and conditions of productions were governed by a patriarchal value system. These were expressed through specific cultural metaphors. In this system, women played an important economic role. The traditionally performed economically productive role, work done by women may be categorized into three

categories: (1) home based production activities which have exchange value in the market; (2) home-based production mainly for family consumption; and (3) paid employment outside the home. However, the impact of Industrialization brought about a sharp rise in the proportion of women's engagement in gainful employment outside the home. This is both a consequence of and a catalyst to socio-cultural structural changes in the industrial society.

The modern industrial world is the first cultural system to permit women to occupy independent jobs and allow them to become independent of other family members. But at the same time, on one hand, legislation restricted child labour in factories and rendered it necessary for parents to look after their young children. On the other hand, the problem of employment has emerged in front of men. Thus, industrialization also created the modern role of house-wife as the dominant mature feminine role for women. At that time too, as the family was governed by patriarchal value system, according to which women were considered incapable of managing their own affairs, helped to create a situation whereby women were supported by their husbands. This was the time when employment of women was considered as obnoxious or undesirable. Even the educated women were prevented from taking up jobs outside the family setting. Each country has its own peculiar phase of women's issues. After the second decade of the twentieth century, the idea of women's ideal place being the home became wide spread and flourished; by the socialization process, socialization reinforced the segregation between the sexes and the differences of motivations, values and incentives for work effort inside and outside the home.

In Indian agricultural economy, little importance was given to the education of women. Even if some had an opportunity to learn, their knowledge was so meager that they could not take up jobs outside the family set up and earn remuneration. In the lower classes, women helped their husbands in the field and also worked in the house. They were considered as useful members of the family. In the middle classes, their reference group was the rich people, who had no necessity for women to do any work. Even though the middle class could least afford to keep their women idle, the ideal of the leisured lady with beauty came in the middle class women; which restricted women from getting any employment outside the home. Our religious ethos also helped them in staying at home all the time. As we know in the traditional society the achieved status had no importance; a person when born is ascribed a status, both in the house and outside

it, as a member of such and such family whereas the women beyond the four walls of their house felt utterly vocation less. However, with the advent of the British rule there was a general awakening, which led to realization of the need of education equally for men and women. As the conditions changed from decade to decade, in the present century, the imparting of education to women is not questioned in the urban areas. More and more girls are given the facility to have higher education. With the rise in the cost of living some women are forced to take up employment outside their homes and utilize their education to get employment and earn to some extent. Gradually, people are being convinced of the importance and need of women's employment outside the home for economic considerations.

The sphere of work is one area where women's actual economic participation exceeds that of men in most cases. Yet one of the most widespread presumptions in the description and analysis of labour force data especially in relation to employment policy and program is the denoting of women's economic roles as supplementary, subsidiary or secondary. The prescription has its base not only in mythology patriarchal attitudes to the roles of women, that whatever they do, it can only be subordinate in status to men's roles- but also in the methodology which generates the facts. The link between the two, the mythology and the methodology, is obvious. It also has its base in reality, in that women and girls are uniquely engaged in household chores or domestic activity and many similarly supportive activities, as well as in production of goods and services which are usually the lowest skilled; lowest paid and predominantly household or household proximate (Jain, 2005).

Women's work is intimately connected with the domestic unit. Biologically the responsibility for reproduction is placed on women and socio cultural norms assign the tasks of nurturing and caring for children to women. Further, patriarchal ideology determines a pattern of sexual division of labour; under this the prime responsibility of caring for all members, men, children, the aged and the ill falls on women. Women's work in the household often goes unaccounted (Deshmukh, 2005). Women, indeed, perform a lot of tasks and often work for more hours than their male counterparts do in a given time period. A major part of the work they do within the family does not get counted as they are not paid for the work which they do in the

family. Moreover, except this unpaid work, they have the responsibilities of caring for the household which involves cooking, cleaning and fetching water and many other works.

Although women as worker who is responsible for most household activities, it goes unmeasured by the prevailing system of our national accounts. But there is a defined sector that includes all those workers who have not been able to formally and legally organize themselves in pursuit of their common interest and employment due to many reasons. It also includes activities carried out by small and family enterprises, partly or wholly with family labour. This sector is called 'Unorganized Sector'.

## **1.1 Unorganized Sector**

British anthropologist Keith Hart coined the term "informal sector" during his 1971 study of economic activities among rural migrants in Accra, Ghana (Samal, 2013). He made a detailed study of urban Ghana in which the study reported the new entrants, particularly rural migrants, to the labour market in the urban areas were forced to work in the informal sector partly owing to their lack of skill and experience needed for the jobs in the urban formal sector (Bagchi & Gobi, 2010). The concept of unorganized sector began to receive world-wide attention in the early 1970s, when the International Labour Organization initiated series efforts to identify and study the area through its World Employment Programme Missions in Kenya, Columbia, Sri Lanka and Philippines primarily underlined the development strategy based on economic growth in which employment was appraised as the prime objective for development (Tiwari, 2005). Since then, the unorganized sector has been the subject of several studies and seminars covering various aspects like its size, employment potential, types of problems they face, its relationship with the formal sector, technological levels, etc.

**1.1.1 Definition of the unorganized sector.** The term unorganized sector includes all those workers who have not been able to formally and legally organize themselves in pursuit of their common interest due to the casual nature of employment, illiteracy, and small size of the entity. Unorganized sector or informal sector has been a topic for discussion amongst academic institutions, civil service organizations, policy makers and social activists since long as huge

workforce is employed in this sector. The National Commission for enterprises in the unorganized sector defined unorganized sector as,

“...consisting of all unregistered private enterprises that are owned by individuals or households, engaged in the sale or production of goods and services operated on a proprietary or partnership basis and with less than ten total workers” (NEUCUS, 2008)

International Labour Organization (ILO) defines informal sector as below:

“... broadly characterized as units engaged in the production of goods or services with an objective of generating employment and income. These units typically operate on a small scale and at a low level of organization, with or without division between labour and capital. It is characterized by casual employment, or personal and social relations rather than contractual arrangements” (OECD, ILO, IMF, &International Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States, 2002).

A study by Mitra (2001) based on fourth economic census of India took the criteria of own account enterprises and employment establishments employing one to nine workers to identify the unorganized sector. The National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), which has been conducting surveys of un-organized enterprises at periodical intervals, generally adopted the following criteria for the identification of unorganized sector:

- i. In the case of manufacturing industries, the enterprises not covered under the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) are taken to constitute the un-organized sector.
- ii. In the case of service industries, all enterprises except Government owned sectors, were regarded as unorganized.

The Directorate General of Employment and Training (DGET), Government of India considers all establishments employing ten workers or more as organized sector, though Employment Exchange (Compulsory Notification of Vacancies) Act, 1959, “makes it mandatory to submit employment returns only for those units ordinarily employing twenty-five or more persons.”

The "Ministry of Labour and Employment " defines unorganized sector,

“an enterprise owned by individuals or self-employed workers and engaged in the production or sale of goods or providing service of any kind where the number of workers is less than ten” (Ministry of Labour and Employment as cited in Padhi, 2007).

The different organizations of India like National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), Directorate General of Employment and Training (DGET), etc. used varying definitions of informal or unorganized sector depending on the specific requirements of each organization. In a nutshell, we can say that the unorganized sector refers to the firms whose activities are not governed by any legal provision or any collective agreements between workers and employers.

**1.1.2 Definition of work.** There has been intense debate in India about what constitutes work and what merits being included in the national statistics as being productive or economically meaningful. This debate has to be understood in the broader backdrop of patriarchal prejudices which define what kinds of activity are ‘work’ and hence can be included as being productive or economically important. Until 1981 census ‘work’ was defined as ‘participation in any economically productive activity’. This therefore, excluded activities performed particularly by women, for consumption within the family. The 1991 census defined work as ‘participation in any economically productive activity, whether the participation is physical or mental’. An added feature of this census was that activities like cultivation for self-consumption and unpaid work for family enterprises were considered to be work (Sankaran, 2006). Yet even this definition is not capable of capturing the unpaid domestic work performed by women that may not amount to ‘work’ as defined above.

**1.1.3 Characteristics of unorganized work.** The unorganized sector is characterized by the presence of factors viz. long hours of work, wage discrimination of men and women, lack of job security, no minimum wages, lack of minimum facilities at work place, ill treatment, heavy physical work and sexual exploitation and so. Various researchers (Kalyani, 2016; Sathya, 2016;

Keerthana & Singh, 2014; Mohanraj, 2013; Gupta, 2009; Datt, 2008) have highlighted following major characteristics of unorganized workers in India:

1. The unorganized workforce is present across India in enormous numbers.
2. Majority of the unorganized workers do not have stable employment as the sector suffers from major seasonal employment opportunities.
3. Fragmented and scattered workplace.
4. Have limited or no education or other skills.
5. Employer-employee relationship does not exist formally.
6. The unorganized workforce in rural areas is divided based on caste and community. Though it is less in urban areas, it cannot be ruled out completely as most of them migrate from rural areas.
7. They are subjected to slavery and destitution due to their low wages which is inadequate to meet their livelihood needs.
8. They are significantly exploited and encounter poor working conditions and low wages compared to a similar job in formal sector.
9. The basic technologies and old production relations are still existent in unorganized sector and the workers are not encouraged to implement advanced technologies or better production relations. The illiteracy and limited exposure to the outside world are also stated as reasons for such condition.
10. Trade unions do not provide sufficient support to the unorganized workers.
11. Unorganized sector does not have adequate and effective labour laws.
12. Easier entry and exit than in the formal sector.
13. Usually minimal capital investment; little or no division between labour and capital.

The unorganized labour is found to be in an adverse position when compared to major aspects of employment in organized sector which covers the terms and conditions of employment, job security, income, social security and retirement benefits, (Sundaram, 2000). The unorganized sector has no contract between employer and employee and lacks social protection measures. Having no fixed employer, these workers are casual, contractual, migrant, home based, own-account workers who attempt to earn a living from whatever meager assets and skills they possess. ILO pointed out in one of the report that workers in the unorganized sector

are largely unaware of their rights, not able to organize themselves and have little or no negotiating power with their employers (ILO, 2000).

**1.1.4 Definition of unorganized worker.** The main problem for the unorganized labour is the employer-employee relationship. This relationship either does not exist, as in the case of home-based workers or agricultural labour, it becomes very difficult to actually prove it. The definition should do away with the mention of the employer-employee relationship.

Unorganized sector worker means any person:

- (a) That is engaged in one or more employments as per categories of the Census of India directly on his or her own account, or through any agency, such as contractor or employer.
- (b) In any place of work including any establishment his or her own home, field, premises or any public place, which may or may not be under the control of others.

“Unorganized worker” (UW) or “informal labour (IL)” refers to a home-based worker, self-employed worker or a wage worker in the unorganized sector and includes a worker in the organized sector who is not covered by the Unorganized Workers Social Act 2008.

Sankaran (2006) collates the different types of activities undertaken under the unorganized sector – agricultural labour, rural workers engaged in animal husbandry and livestock rearing, workers engaged in cottage and village industries and those working in tanneries, workers engaged in collecting forest produce, collecting tendu leaves, workers in brick kilns, workers engaged in stone quarries, building and construction workers, beedi workers, workers engaged in timber and felling, industries, mills, salt workers among other categories and petty traders/vendors domestic workers and those engages in home-based work.

The Second Commission on Labour (2002) specifies the characteristics of unorganized labour as apprentices, casual and contract workers, home-based artisans and a section of self-employed persons involved in jobs such as vending, rag picking, rickshaw pulling, agriculture workers, migrant labour and those who perform manual and helper jobs. The rise of female participation in the unorganized sector is due to the economic compulsion in families and the

employer's preference for female employees being available as a flexible and often pliable labour force.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India has classified the unorganized labour force into four groups based on their occupation, nature of job, especially distressed categories and service categories:

**1. Unorganized labour in terms of occupation.** It includes small and marginal farmers, sharecroppers (a form of agriculture in which a landowner allows a tenant to use the land in return for a share of the crops produced on their portion of land), fishermen, fisherwomen, beedi rollers, landless agricultural workers, animal husbandry workers, labelling and packing workers, leather workers, weavers; workers in brick-kilns and stone quarries, building and construction workers, artisans, salt workers, workers in saw mills and oil mills, etc.

**2. Unorganized labour in terms of nature of Job.** It includes attached agricultural labourers, migrant workers, bonded labourers, contract and casual labourers.

**3. Unorganized labour in terms of especially distressed categories.** It includes toddy tappers, scavengers, head load carriers, drivers of animal-driven vehicles and loaders and un-loaders.

**4. Unorganized labour in terms of Service categories.** It includes midwives, domestic workers, fishermen, barbers, newspaper vendors, vegetable and fruit vendors, etc.

Along with these four categories, there is also a large population of unorganized labour workforce like cobblers, auto drivers, sericulture workers, handicraft artisans, hamals, power loom workers, handloom weavers, physically handicapped self-employed persons, lady tailors, rickshaw pullers, carpenters, tannery workers etc.

**1.1.5 Employment in organized and unorganized sector.** Over the past few decades, employment in the unorganized sector has risen rapidly in all regions in the world. Organized sector is the sector for which information on workers is available with some degree of accuracy. The organized sector offers secure and relatively well paid jobs. Whereas the Indian Economy is characterized by the existence of a vast majority of unorganized labour employment. While the contribution of the unorganized sector to GDP is about 50 per cent, "its dominance in the employment front is more than 90 per cent of the total workforce which has been engaged in the

informal economy” (Kalyani, 2016). Major proportions of the unorganized workers are employed in agricultural sector, construction industry, textile industry and home-based jobs. Approximately 52 per cent of the unorganized workers are in agricultural sector as per the Economic Survey 2007-08 (Economic Survey, 2008). According to National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector, these 52 per cent unorganized workers are engaged in agriculture and allied sector and constitute more than 90 per cent of the labour work force which contributes 50 per cent to GDP. Out of total workforce, at least 120 million are women (NCEUS, 2008).

The growth of unorganized sector employment has always been greater than total employment in organized sector, which indicates faster growth of employment in the unorganized sector (Kalyani, 2016). Available data suggests that the employment in the unorganized sector is on the rise. For instance, by providing a comparison of the NSSO Employment Data for 55th and 61st Rounds (for 1999-2000 and 2004-05 respectively) the NCEUS (2007) explains the increase in the informal nature of the employment in the organized sector. It is widely acknowledged that the unorganized sector in India suffers from a low productivity syndrome, compared to the organized sector due to major characteristics of the work environment, and the exploitation. Further the NCEUS data (2007) shows us that an estimated 93.46% of the labour force (at 5% GDP growth) would be employed in the informal sector by the end of the 12th Five Year Plan (2012-17). The Table 1 provides that estimate of labour force in unorganized sector in India.

**Table 1: Estimated Labour Force in The Unorganized Sector by the Year 2012-17**

Year	GDP Growth Rate (%)	Employment (million)			Percentage share	
		Formal	Informal	Total	Formal	Informal
2004-05	Actual	32.79	368.35	401.13	8.17	91.83
2006-07	Actual	33.87	393.06	426.93	7.93	92.07
2011-12	9	34.54	453.13	487.67	7.08	92.92
	7	34.18	442.18	476.36	7.18	92.82
	5	33.83	431.4	465.23	7.27	92.73
2016-17	9	33.93	521.96	555.9	6.1	93.9

	7	33.08	490.46	523.54	6.32	93.68
	5	32.26	461.05	493.31	6.54	93.46

Source: The National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS), 2007

It is very important to note that the employment of women is very high in the unorganized sector.

## 1.2 Women in Unorganized Sector

**1.2.1 Global scenario.** A well-known author, Jaques Charmes in the “World Development Report” (2000) presented few facts on women’s participation in unorganized sector. First, the unorganized sector is the main source of employment for women in most developing countries. The data suggest that the majority of working women in developing countries are engaged in the unorganized sector. In some countries in sub-Saharan Africa, all of the women non-agricultural labour force is in the unorganized sector, for example, the unorganized sector accounts for over 95 percent of women workers outside agriculture in Benin, Chad, and Mali whereas in India and in Indonesia, the unorganized sector accounts for nine out of every ten women working outside agriculture. In Latin American and East Asian countries, half or more of the total women non-agricultural workforce is in the unorganized sector. Second, the unorganized sector is biggest source of employment for women compared to the men in most countries. Third, women’s share of the total unorganized sector workforce outside of agriculture is higher than men’s share in developing countries (Charmes, 2000).

The composition of the women workforce in unorganized sector varies somewhat across regions, in many African countries; almost all women in the informal sector are either self-employed or contributing family workers. Although the majority of workers who are self-employed or contributing to the family economy in many countries in Latin America and Asia, approximately 20 percent of women in the unorganized sector are casual wage workers (Geetika, Singh and Gupta, 2011). There is an additional percent of women who work as industrial workers or home workers, which are not captured in official statistics. There are gender differences in the unorganized sector. Compared to the male unorganized workforce, women in

the informal sector are more likely to be own account workers and subcontract workers and are less likely to be owner operators or paid employees of unorganized enterprises. These gender gaps in employment status within the unorganized sector have implications for earnings, poverty levels and quality of life which are discussed below in detail.

**1.2.2 Major segments.** The vast majority of women in the unorganized sector are home-based workers, street vendors and domestic workers.

**1.2.2.1 Home-based workers.** The term “home-based workers” has been used by organizations in Asia to cover a range of people, mainly women, who work at home regardless of their exact conditions of employment. In industrialized countries, the term "home workers" has generally been used in reference to "piece-rate" workers who complete specific steps in the production process for an employer or subcontractor in their homes. Primarily, the term “home-based workers” refer to two types of workers who carry out remunerative work from their homes

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(1) Self-employed home-based workers who assume all the risks of being independent operators. They procure raw materials, supplies, and equipment, and pay transport costs. In addition, they sell their goods, to customers. Most do not hire others but may have unpaid family members work with them.

(2) Sub-contracted home-based workers (called homeworkers) are contracted by an individual entrepreneur or a firm, often through an intermediary. They are usually given the raw materials and paid per piece. They typically do not sell the finished goods. They do, however, cover many costs of production: workplace, equipment, supplies, utilities, and transport. "Homeworker" is also the term currently in use by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and is generally understood to mean those working at home who are dependent on employers or intermediaries for work. However, it is not uncommon to see the terms used interchangeably among those working in the field in different parts of the world (Jhabvala & Jane, 1996) and unpaid workers in family businesses.

**1.2.2.2 Domestic workers.** Under the ILO Convention 1989, a domestic worker is defined as “any person engaged in domestic work within an employment relationship.” According to ILO, domestic workers are comprised of three main groups;

- (1) Live-in domestic workers,
- (2) Part-time / live-out domestic worker,
- (3) Migrant domestic workers which has
  - (a) Inter-state domestic workers and
  - (b) Overseas domestic workers,

(1) *Live-in domestic workers.* Live-in domestic workers stay at the place of employment. They are engaged in all domestic work ranging from housekeeping, washing clothes, utensils, cooking to baby-sitting, childcare or elderly care (ILO, 1989). They are dependent on their employers for their basic needs such as food and shelter. Most live-in domestic workers are women who have migrated or have been trafficked from villages to cities in search of employment. Sometimes they are to a large extent child; unmarried and sometimes married young girls separated or widowed women.

(2) *Part-time domestic workers.* Part-time domestic workers are either local residents or migrated from rural areas and habitated in the slums of the city, and employed to private households. Those who work in the multiple house owners to earn their livelihood are called part-timers. They are part-timers not because they do only part time work but because they do not stay with the employer and are not expected to be on call 24 hours a day. Their work pattern is either work all day for one household or work with multiple households in a day. Part-time workers are less dependent on their employers compared to full time workers. They live with their families and run their homes, as well as those of their employers. However, they are less dependent on their employers for their basic needs and are characterized with a greater degree of independence than the live-in domestic workers.

(3) *Migrant domestic workers.* Most women migrate from their villages to nearby cities to work as domestic workers. This migration takes two forms: (a) Inter-state domestic workers, and (b) Overseas domestic workers.

### **1.3 Women working in Unorganized Sector and Growth**

Although the average income of women in the unorganized sector is low, the women's participation in the unorganized workforce contributes significantly to gross domestic product (GDP). Women informal traders contribute to a significant share (20-65%) of GDP in the trading sector. For those countries where data is available, the contribution of women in the unorganized sector to total GDP is greater than their share of employment in the sector. This is because women are more likely than men to engage in multiple activities in the unorganized sector. Arguably, the most invisible unorganized workers – homeworkers or industrial outworkers - contribute the most to the global trade.

There is a correlation between working in the unorganized sector and poverty: a higher percentage of people working in the unorganized sector are poor compared to those who are employed in organized sector. Further, this overlap is gendered. The more women are in unorganized sector who are poor compared to men. However, it is important to recognize the fact that there is no simple relationship between working in the unorganized sector and poverty or working in the organized sector and prosperity. Unorganized workers typically lack the social protection benefits which are available to the organized sector, such as worker benefits and health insurance. They also work under irregular and casual contracts. When the data has closely analyzed, the precise relationship between unorganized sector employment and the intensity of poverty appears when unorganized sector employment is disaggregated by status of employment (i.e., employer, self-employed, or worker), and gender (Charmes, 2000).

## **1.4 National Scenario**

Women in our society have had a secondary status in Indian family. The economic dependence of women upon men has not only pushed them into the background but also resulted into their secondary status both within and outside the family (Kalyani, 2016; Neetha, 2004; Padma, 2002; Wadhera, 1976). Despite the fact that the women have proved their potential in most areas of their lives, their contribution is not recognized and celebrated. In India, women play a vital role in the family as well as in the economy. Yet, their economic status is still found to be low.

**1.4.1 Women employment in unorganized sector.** Women's share in organized sector employment has been increased up to 17 percent only (Rustagi, 2003). Most women within the organized sector are located in the lower rungs of the hierarchy. Very few women are managers or bosses or decision-makers. An analysis of correlation between education and women's share in the unorganized sector emphasizes that education is a primary factor that helps women to earn better and enhance their capacities.

National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) reveals that around 30 million workers in India keep migrating constantly and women workforce has increased by 25.94 million since the year 2000 (NSSO, 2002). The NSSO report on the casual workers in India clearly shows that the significant increase in the number of casual workers and decline in the number of regular workers (NSSO, 2012).

An overwhelming majority of the Indian Labour Force works in the Unorganized Sector, of which women constitute the lion's share. Unorganized Sector is an important contributor to the Net Domestic Product (NDP), contributing to over 60 per cent of NDP. The term unorganized sector includes all those workers who have not been able to formally and legally organize themselves in pursuit of their common interest due to certain constraints like the casual nature of employment, ignorance and illiteracy, and small and scattered size of the establishment etc.

Majority of women working in the unorganized sector carry the double burden of poverty and discrimination. Women are confined to 'inside' occupation, the invisible and unorganized sector, while men's domain is 'outside' the invisible world of work (Kumar, 2005). Having to work in the unorganized sector of the economy, women get no recognition as economically active individuals. Most women perform different work for their livelihood. Within all work that women do, agriculture is considered as the biggest unorganized sector where women work in big numbers. Rural women who work in the farm-participate in a wide range of farm activities by slogging alongside with men in the field as well as taking care of the home and children, thereby performing a dual role that of a homemaker and of a partner in the farming activities outside the home.

## **1.5 Situation of Home-based Workers and Domestic Workers in India**

**1.5.1 Home-based workers.** There is scarcity of statistics on home-based workers; available evidence suggests that home-based work is an important source of employment, especially for women. Furthermore, it is also categorized as a supplementary economic activity yet it is underestimated. The recent Informal Economy Monitoring Study (IEMS) in 2012 coordinated by (WIEGO), Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing provides critical insight on home-based workers in Ahmedabad, India; Bangkok, Thailand; and Lahore, Pakistan. Home-based workers contribute significantly to their households, society, and the economy. Around 30 per cent of self-employed home-based workers purchase materials from formal firms; while under 30 per cent of both groups sell to or produce for formal firms. This validates the fact that few home-based workers have links to formal firms as well (Ibid). Also, it is important to note that many home-based workers are linked to the global economy through global subcontracting chains, also called global value chains. (Carr et al, 2000).

Home-based work is perceived as work with less economic value and low waged all over the world. Home-based work is considered to be a means of earning for women and its roots can be traced back from history for instance thread making, weaving, dairying, basket making were such kind of work which was carried out from home; since a large number of home-based workers are women, the work performed by them is further undervalued. In India, such workers can be classified as two types of workers, (1) Self-employed and (2) Sub-contracted home-based workers (also known as home-workers) who carry out remunerative work from their homes, which were discussed earlier.

**1.5.1.1 Problems faced by home-based workers.** It is established fact that home-based workers face numerous problems like working environment, more working hours and less payment compared to the amount of time and efforts put for the work by them etc. The IEMS study (2012) reported that home-based workers face transport problems, they are also exposed to occupational hazards (WIEGO, 2012). Following are the list of problems reported by various researches.

1. Lack of Collective Bargaining skills

2. Home-based women workers have little access to education and skills including the information and skills needed to sell their own products in the market.
3. Many home-based women workers are overworked and are exposed to dangerous chemicals and unhealthy and even toxic substances at times.
4. Family members including children are also exposed to these occupational hazards, they even lack occupational health and safety measures.
5. The life of women working in home-based work sector is very tough as they have to perform a dual role.
6. Low and irregular incomes most of the times.
7. Invisible to policy makers and to the general public, as well as to the final consumers of goods and services they provide.
8. Lack of social security not being covered under most of the social protection schemes.
9. Lack of capital to make improvements in tools, technologies raw materials, storage areas and other livelihood related necessities.
10. Lack of sufficient resources for health, safety, security and other needs that allow home-based workers to pursue their economic activities.
11. Inadequate housing and habitat conditions like poor, cramped spaces with bad lighting and ventilation.
12. Home-based women workers' conditions are such that it allows their exploitation by middlemen as well as contractors. It is important to reverse these contributing factors to enable home-based workers to avoid exploitation and become empowered and take charge of their own future.

The home-based women workers work more than men as they have to play a dual role working both in and outside the home (Dadhech, 2016). They are working in unorganized sector are living a life far below from satisfaction and the low earning of these women cannot meet with their daily needs (Mittal, 2012). Although, they do marry, bear children, and get old but under these phases of life, they live the same life. A few of them are assisted by other

members of family in household work otherwise they have to work solely most of the times. They live under unhygienic environment which results dangerous diseases (WIEGO,2012). They have no medical facilities even at the critical moment of giving birth to children (NCEUS, 2008). 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), but these legislations are not practically and strictly implemented in several cases. It is the need of the hour that government and NGOs must come forward to improve the conditions of these women in unorganized sector. The Trade Union and Voluntary Organizations can play a vital role in making them conscious of cleanliness, health, education and above all their basic rights and this can be done only with the joint efforts of the government, not-for-profit/non-governmental organizations as well as common people in general.

**1.5.2 Domestic workers.** Domestic work is often embedded within socio-cultural structures, which may make it difficult for employers to see themselves as such. Moreover, gender, ethnicity and caste also weakens the bargaining power of domestic workers. Domestic workers themselves often work for long hours; have poor remuneration, little access to social protection, and more importantly, work in isolation. Their isolation and vulnerability expose them to various types of exploitation, which are mostly remain unreported. Many though not all, come from poor households, often in rural communities, where limited access to education and skills development, leave them with few employment opportunities and choices.

Many studies that focused on women's labour participation in agricultural and allied activities have mistakenly undermined the multiple jobs that women do. They have considered only one form of paid work that the women from lower strata are engaged in. In reality, women workers work as domestic servant, as well as contribute to agricultural work on a seasonal and even daily wage basis (Kothari, 1991; Sodhi, Rawal, & Ramanujam, 2010). Therefore, domestic work contributes in generation of earnings for many women.

Many women migrate from their villages to other cities in search of work as domestic workers. They are typically live-in domestic workers and are thus most vulnerable to physical

and sexual abuse, excessively long working hours, and deprivation. Many of them are from tribal regions and the traditional discrimination they face as women and as live in domestic workers is compounded by their ethnicity (Kundu& Sharma, 2001).

Despite their important contributions, domestic workers have suffered historic discrimination and routine exclusion from labour protection laws and have been left them at risk of a wide range of abuse and labour exploitation, including excessive hours of work with no rest, nonpayment of wages forced confinement, physical and sexual abuse, forced labour and trafficking.

## **1.6 Problems in Unorganized Sector**

The labour market of India has witnessed tremendous transformations, including growth of unorganized sector, deterioration in the quality of employment, weakened workers' organizations and collective bargaining institutions, and marked decline in social security (Kalyani, 2016). Workers working in the unorganized sector constitute the neglected and vulnerable segments of workers. Most of the workers are poor and illiterate, do not have any assets, and also do not possess any marketable skills. Most of the activities in which they are engaged usually escape attention of the government machinery for enforcing labour laws and regulations, and even for providing social security (NCEUS, 2009). The available researches in the field of unorganized sectors indicate poor productivity, which is on rise, because of poor work conditions, and several other challenges faced by unorganized workers (Chandra, 2006). This adversely affects their personal and professional growth which marginalizes them further. Added to this, many of them are subject to occupational illness and hazards, and lack awareness of laws that protect them (Ramanujam, 2004).

**1.6.1 Problems faced by women in unorganized sector.** Women workers in the informal economy consist of the most vulnerable working segments in the society. They come from a marginalized population whose' legal, economic and political status limit their ability to demand their rights. The nature of women's work ranges from wage employment or self-employment, family labour and piece rated work. It also has its base in reality, in that women

and girls are uniquely engaged in household chores or domestic activity and many similarly supportive activities, as well as in production of goods and services which are usually the lowest skilled; lowest paid and predominantly household or household proximate (Jain, 2005). Most of the position of women in the unorganized sector has been poor. The Shramshakti report has highlighted the nature of self-employment taken up by women in this sector and has offered recommendations for both men and women workers in this sector (Bhatt, 1988). Based on various research findings (Monisha & Rani, 2016; Arya & Roy, 2011; Neetha, 2004; Padma, 2002), the researcher has classified problems into two categories: (1) Problems faced by women in work place; and (2) Problems faced by women in personal life.

**1.6.1.1 Problems faced by women in work place.** Women faced several hazards even before the era of globalization; but these problems have increased several times with the advent of the neo-liberal policies of globalization, liberalization and privatization (WIEGO, 2010). Working women are more vulnerable to the exploitation, and exposed to more risks which impose more stress and strain, both physical and mental (NCEUS, 2008). Some of the problems faced by the unorganized women workers at the workplace include, but not limited, as follow:

a) *Job insecurity.* Among the workers in the unorganized sector, a large number of them are women, who are unskilled, receive low wages and have no job security. Availability of work is irregular; and when work is available, women must work long hours (Subhlakshmi, 2012).

b) *Wage discrimination.* The women workers are paid lower and marginal wages than the male workers women are given the work which is often unskilled or low skilled and low paid. Rao and Suryanarayana (2013) consider that female dominated jobs are being devalued, degraded and least paid. Study conducted by Dave, (2012) showed that majority of the migrant women were engaged in the construction industry and were employed in unskilled and low paying jobs as coolies, laborers and helpers. Women were exploited to a greater degree as they were paid less compared to men although they were doing similar nature of work and were spending some number of hours on work. Out of 395 million unorganized workers, 79 per cent of them live on an income of less than Rs. 20 a day (NCEUS, 2007). They do not get benefit of Minimum Wage Act or Factories Act, benefits like those in Organized sector. Further, they work

for long hours without proper safety and security; they don't get benefit of overtime for extra hours they put in and leave benefits.

c) *Poor working conditions.* Women workers in unorganized sector have poor bargaining power and that is why they cannot pressurize the employers for their rights to have conducive working conditions (Sodhi, Rawal, & Ramanujam, 2010). Women are forced to work under very poor working and living conditions (Kundu, & Sharma, 2001). Poor working conditions often lead to several health related problems.

d) *Exploitation and sexual harassment.* Exploitation and Sexual harassment is another serious hazards faced by working women in the unorganized sector. Women belonging to lower caste and communities face more disparity in social terms (Monisha & Rani, 2016). Exploitation includes inability to raise their voice, verbal 'passes' to physical assaults. Most of the women suffer the pain and trauma in silence. Joshi (2007) reports that female workers working in unorganized sector in Gujarat are subjected to various forms of hardship and exploitation at the hands of their superiors.

e) *Absence of maternal benefit and child care facility.* Women working in the unorganized sector are denied the benefit of maternity benefit and child care facilities. After delivery or those who have babies, are often forced to leave the work or leave their children at home, under the care of their elder children, or old people or neighbors (Kalyani, 2016). Most often women workers either work during the pregnancy without availing leave and rest for self (NCEUS, 2008). They have triple responsibilities to work, take care of babies and home. This exerts great anxiety and emotional strain.

f) *Lack of training.* In Unorganized sectors, women are not professionally trained so they lack sharpen professional skills. This lack of skills further marginalizes women to get higher pay or higher level of jobs. This also keeps them in unskilled labour job. Women in developing societies constituting the largest share of world's illiterates, lack of educational and training opportunities for acquisition of higher level skills. Their traditional skills will be no longer needed by the changing market economy. This also leads to a decline in opportunities for women's employment (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development – OECD, 2008).

g) *Insufficient labour law workers' absence of social security.* It is a paradox that million women, working strenuously day in and day out, have no legislative protection, and

social security. The elements of job quality, job security, good working conditions, and remuneration commensurate with the work, adherence to workers' rights, social protection and conducive human resource management – are missing in the unorganized sector (Kundu, & Sharma, 2001).

**1.6.1.2 Problems faced in personal life.** Although more women are providing economic support to the family, unfortunately, the attitude towards women and their role in the family remained the same. Women are still perceived as weak, inferior and second-class citizen (Subhalakshmi, 2012).

a) *Poor health.* Health of an individual is closely linked to his/her status in the society. Women universally have lower status and are most of the times seen only for their reproductive roles. Women get less money for their work get no medical and other benefits which they are entitled under provision of the employment rules. Women have double disadvantage because of these discriminations. Women bear a triple burden of reproduction, production and domestic work. Each of these has its own problems and women have to perform all the three of them, and being denied proper working conditions, results in their poor health.

b) *Lack of control over income.* Even though women work, most of them don't have any control over the income they earn. A great majority of them have to hand over their salary to their husbands or in-laws. They are not allowed to manage their own income. The earning is spent in the expenses of home. Employment of women still does not mean control over money or economic independence for the poor women.

c) *Dual responsibility.* The major problems for working women arise out of the dual responsibility of the working women, household chores and the work. They are required by their position to play a dual set of roles- one as home makers, wives and mothers, and the other as employees. At home, in addition to biological functions, there are other duties which they are expected to perform because of the prevailing cultural norms and values. Being simultaneously confronted with the dual demands of home and work, they are liable to face adjustment problems.

d) *Conflict between the two roles.* In addition, the above described burdens on the women, the dual role also demands of her two different sets of values. Difficulties arise because

often these two roles make a simultaneous demand on the person whose physical capacity, energy, endurance and time have definite limits. In addition to these characteristics, woman who is a wife also expected to be sweet and soft, sensitive and adaptable, gentle, unassertive, good-humored, domesticated, yielding and in most cases, not too intelligent. Hence a kind of conflict arising from a lack of adjustment between two competing roles is likely to be faced by those persons who have to comply with dual obligations at the same time.

There is a lack of mechanism and system to identify home-based and domestic women, ensure safety, security, health concerns and address their different problems. There exist very few studies to explore personal, social and professional problems faced by home-based and domestic women and interventions to address their concerns.

## **1.7 Global Movement of Women in Unorganized Sector**

During the 1980s, various trade unions, grassroots organizations, and non-governmental organizations working with home-based workers and street vendors – in both the North and the South – began to establish linkages. In the mid-1990s, at two separate meetings in Europe, these organizations came together to form two International alliances of women in the informal economy: one of home-based workers called HomeNet, the other of street vendors called StreetNet. At the first StreetNet meeting in 1995, the founding members drafted an International Declaration that sets forth a plan to promote national policies to support and protect the rights of street vendors. At the first HomeNet meeting in 1994, the founding members planned a global campaign for an international convention that would recognize and protect home-based workers. The campaign resulted into high vote in favor of an international convention on homework at the annual general conference of the International Labour Organization (ILO). At the later stage of the campaign, statistics on homework was compiled, which was presented at the 1996 ILO annual conference and requested the United National Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to convene a policy dialogue in Asia with government delegations to the ILO conference. These initiatives pushed the ratification of the ILO Convention on Homework in 1996. In the year 1997, the group of like-minded organizations like HomeNet and StreetNet, and UNIFEM have established a global research-policy network to promote better data, programs, and policies in

support of women in the unorganized sector. The network later called Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO).

The WIEGO has identified five key areas: urban policies to protect street vendors; global trade and investment policies to maximize opportunities, and minimize threats associated with globalization for home-based workers; social protection measures for women working in unorganized sectors; mobilization of women in the unorganized sector and their representation in relevant policy-making bodies at the local, national, and international levels; and data on the size and contribution of the unorganized sector. The global movement comprised of HomeNet, StreetNet, and WIEGO and their affiliates is an example of the joint action for the poor which represents an international movement of low-income women working in the unorganized sector.

As a result of advocacy, the Government of India asked representatives of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) – who are also founding members of HomeNet, StreetNet, and WIEGO – to participate in a process to formulate a national policy on home-based work.

## **1.8 Government Schemes and Initiatives for Workers in Unorganized Sector**

Unorganized workers' contribution to GDP in 2004-05 was estimated to be of the order of 50 per cent. Yet, legislation backed welfare measures (social security measures) have been confined, by and large, to the organized workers. “Only 6 per cent of unorganized workers are covered by social security measures” (NCEUS, 2006; p. 24). The National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS) mentions that three types of social protection (employment security, work security, and social security) are not extended or reached to the unorganized sector workforce. In order to extend social security to the unorganized sector, the Government of India passed the landmark act, Unorganized Workers' Social Security Act (UWSSA) in the year 2008. The prime object of the Act was to provide unorganized sector workforce with a minimum level of social protection so as to enable them to endure income and health related shocks, stay out of poverty, and ultimately allow them to lead dignified lives. The various social security

schemes under the Unorganized Workers' Social Security Act - UWSSA (2008) for the unorganized workers are as follow:

- Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Schemes
- National Family Benet Scheme
- Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY)
- Handloom Weaver's Comprehensive Welfare Scheme (HWCWS)
- Handicraft Artesian Comprehensive Welfare Scheme (HACWS)
- Pension to Master Craft Persons (PMCP)
- National Pension Scheme - Swavalamban (NPS-S)
- National Scheme for Welfare of Fishermen and Training and Extension (NSWFTE)
- Janshree Bima Yojana (JBY)
- Aam Admi Bima Yojana (AABY)
- Rashtriya Swathya Bima Yojana (RSBY)

Currently four models of social assistance are in operation in the country (IFMR, 2008).

(1)*The welfare fund model.* Here the fund is created through contributions from various sources including the employers and the government under the supervision of the State.

(2) *The social assistance model.* Under this, cash payment is made to defined beneficiaries through budget provision.

(3)*The social security scheme model.* These are schemes designed to protect unorganized workers. The schemes are usually implemented by the concerned governments or their agencies for defined categories of workers.

(4) *The mutual help model.* This model is promoted and mediated by an NGO with contributions from the workers. In general, the welfare funds have been adopted in most of the Central and State Governments' social security programmes for the welfare of workers in the unorganized sector. The Government of India established five Welfare Funds between 1946 and 1981 which still exist in recent times These funds are administered by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India in certain occupations where employee-employer relationships are not clearly described. The scheme of welfare funds is outside the framework of employee-employer contract. Further, delivery of services, specified under the funds, is affected without linkage to worker's contribution (Sodhi, Rawal, and Ramanujam, 2008).

Although the Constitution of India is yet to recognize Social Security as a fundamental right it does require that the State should strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting a social harmony. Specially, Article 41 of the Constitution requires that the State should make effective provision for securing the right to employment, education and public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement. Article 42 requires that the State should make provision for securing humane conditions for women to work and for the maternity benefits to the working women.

According to the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS), Kerala leads all other states in India with statutory provisions for as many as 19 welfare funds covering 54 percent of unorganized workers in the state. Maharashtra has a relatively well functioning 39 different welfare funds for INR 150000 /- 'Mathadi Workers'. This covers largely the Goods Transport Unprotected Workers, and Cloth Market and Shops Workers. Gujarat, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh also have established welfare funds for selected categories of workers (NCEUS 2006). These funds mostly cover requirements such as accidental death and injury, maternity and financial assistance for the education of children of Women working in Unorganized Sector.

Another major initiative of the Central Government (regulating the conditions of work and provision of a measure of social security) relates to construction workers who form one of the largest segments of workers in the unorganized sector. Two umbrella legislations have been passed by the Parliament in this regard, on the basis of which the states are expected to enact state-level legislations. These two Central Acts are:

- a) The Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996; and
- b) The Building and Other Construction Workers Cess Act (1996).

Following these Acts, the Building and Other Construction Workers (ECS) Central Rules, 1998 were notified on November 19, 1998. These Acts are applicable to those establishments that employ ten or more workers in any settings where the project value is worth

more than INR 10 lakhs. The Welfare Funds proposed in the Act are to be financed by the contributions from beneficiaries - levy of access on construction works at a rate ranging between 1 and 2 percent of the construction cost incurred by an employer and non-mandatory grants by the State/Central governments. Under these umbrella legislations, all state governments are expected to enact their own legislations. Most of the states are still in the process of adoption and implementation of these Acts. The Government of Gujarat has following initiatives for the unorganized sector:

- Shramik Suraksha Accident Group Insurance Scheme
- Welfare Scheme for Salt Workers
- Welfare Scheme for Inter and Inter-State Migrant Rural Workers Financial Assistance to rural labours in serious and malignant diseases.

## **1.9 Public Initiatives**

Several public agencies and organizations are imparting information and support services to the group of unorganized workers in India and across the globe. Such efforts, however, are part of a larger package of services such as access to micro credit, housing, preventive health care and livelihood promotion. It has been estimated that 48-50 lakhs of unorganized workers are covered by non-governmental organizations (NCEUS 2006). Predominant form of welfare assistance provided by the NGOs has been in terms of health-related risks. Although, the contribution of public initiative is marginal, it must be recognized that "the contribution of the voluntary sector highlights a variety of best practices used by it was also the task of building institutional models that are closer to fulfilling the needs of the people at the grassroots level" (Ibid).

## **1.10 Non-Government Organizations Working in Unorganized Sectors**

**1.10.1 Self-employed women's association (SEWA).**It provides need based services to the women and charge very minimal. SEWA introduced various insurance schemes for its

members in Ahmedabad, SEWA also works as a nodal agency to get cover under various policies from different insurance companies. The risk covered includes medical benefit up to Rs.1000/-, maternity benefit of Rs.300/-, in case of natural or accidental death including disablement payment up to Rs.10, 000/- of the member or her husband.

**1.10.2 Working women forum (WWF).** This organization trains women from the poor communities and make them skilled as healthcare cadres. These health care skilled workers of WWF have served a population of about 1 million in 720 slums and 340 villages. This organization also provides Health Insurance under which maternity benefits and reimbursement of hospital expenses are covered.

### **1.11 Gaps in Protecting Rights of Women in Unorganized Sector**

Despite of various social security schemes, labor laws, and welfare schemes these benefits are not reached to women workers in unorganized sectors and they still live in distressed condition. The implementation of schemes is legally necessary in the organized sector; however, it is recommended for unorganized sector without legal obligations. Further, the enforcement system also is not effective to ensure implementation of these acts/schemes.

Because of temporary employer-employee relationship these laws cannot be effectively implemented. Most of the Indian labor laws use number filters or wage filters like: The Factories Act for health, safety, welfare and other aspects of workers requires an establishment with minimum 10 workers with power connection and the provisions for crèche is with the establishment having minimum 30 or more number of employed women. Rest room is mandatory only if the number of employees is 150 or more. Canteen is mandatory number of employees is 250 or more. The provisions for ambulance, Para-medical staff is mandatory only if employee strength is 500 or more. Employees Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 requires minimum 20 number of employees. For Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 the establishment requires minimum 10 employees. But nearly 97% of unorganized sector units employ less than 10 workers, they get easily escaped from these laws. The only law which has been enforced to some extent in this sector is Minimum Wages Act. The unorganized sector is not properly unionized, hence this sector lacks bargaining power and also most of the workforce

from this sector is recruited through contractors and not directly by employers. This gives more power to contractors and the wages fixed by them are supposed to be accepted by workers. The wages mostly are below minimum wages. In this condition actual employers can easily escape themselves from minimum wages act. The workers from unorganized sector are under skilled or semi-skilled. The opportunities of development and learning new skills in this sector are very less and especially women are not much aware about the available opportunities due to these reasons they cannot find better jobs somewhere else and are compelled to do job under the poor working conditions. The women workers are illiterate, they are not aware about their rights. They fear of raising their voice against unfair practices and they don't have proper knowledge about various welfare schemes of government for their benefits. All these reasons, along with lack of government enthusiasm to implement the rules and certain other gaps leads to negligible improvement in poor conditions of women workers in the unorganized sectors.

## **1.12 JUSTIFICATION**

### **1.12.1 Justification of the Study**

Globalization has transformed the workforce and Indian economy. It stands for challenges and opportunities for unorganized sector globally. Especially for India, unorganized sector constitutes a pivotal part of the economy. According to National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector, around 52 per cent of Unorganized Workers are engaged in agriculture and allied sector and constitute more than 90 per cent of the labour work force which contributes 50 per cent to GDP.

Women constitute the largest segment of India's unorganized work force. Out of total workforce, at least 120 million are women. They are hired in unorganized sector as part time helper in household, construction industry, manufacturing industry, garment industry and so. According to National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER), almost 97 per cent female workers are involved in the unorganized or informal sector. They are from the poorest rural households and very often from scheduled, backward or tribal castes. A close look in to the trend of industry wise female workers in organized and unorganized sector shows that in the

three NSS round, namely, 61st round (2004-05), and 66th round (2009-10) the percentage share of unorganized sector was higher than organized sector. In case of agriculture about 99 per cent female workers were engaged in unorganized sector and only about 1 per cent was engaged in organized sector throughout this period.

Women's work most of the time goes unrecognized and the benefits hardly reach them. They enter into the labour market only when the economic compulsions force them to supplement the meager family earnings. The concept to work as a supplementing or balancing force in the family has made them susceptible to all sorts of discriminatory treatment and exploitation (physically, economically and socially) in the field of employment.

Unorganized women workers can be categorized as three major activity status, viz. self-employed, regular wage/salaried employees and casual labour in work other than public work. A larger proportion of women workers engaged in these categories indicate their low economic status (NCEUS, 2007). A major portion of women workers in India are engaged as self-employed. It is found from NSS data that in 2009-10, 77.5 per cent of all women workers in unorganized non-agriculture in rural areas and 64.9 per cent in urban areas was employed as self-employed. It was noted that small proportion of women worker was employed as regular wage or salaried employees (4.9 percent) in rural areas (Unni, Bali, and Vyas, 1998). In the urban areas, however, comparatively high (20.4 per cent) unorganized women workers were employed as regular wage/salaried employees. Again, 17.5 per cent unorganized women workers in rural areas were worked as casual labour and such figure for urban areas was 14.7 per cent. Self-employed women workers are again classified as own account workers, employers and unpaid family workers. Women were mainly work as own account workers in both rural (42.3 per cent) and urban (40.6 per cent) areas. It is found that 35.1 per cent of all informal women workers in rural areas and 23.7 per cent in urban areas worked as unpaid family workers (NCCUSW, 2006). Another important indicator is that women workers mostly involved in subsidiary works. The increased number of women in subsidiary status especially in rural areas in the context of alarming agrarian crisis means that women do not have opportunities for long term regular employment (Neetha, 2009).

Unorganized sector is characterized by low productivity, low wages, poor working conditions, irregularity of employment, and absence of social security measures (Babu, 2016; Singh, 2014; Tiwari, 2005). Further, the conditions of women workers are vulnerable. Women working in unorganized sector are not included in the official statistics and their work is not documented and considered as wage work, unskilled work which poses a great challenge in linking them with social security schemes and protect them from exploitation. Many researchers and scholars (Martha, 2001; Mehta, 2012; Standing, 1999) stated that women by and large were not seen, counted or recorded. Often, women, who are engaged in subsidiary activities, are recorded as non-worker (Saradmoni, 1989).

Women in unorganized sector face numerous problems. Sengupta (2005) also detected that women working in mining industry of Rajasthan are deprived of even the minimum wages, what to talk of welfare measures. They are never employed on a permanent basis. Their work need strenuous labour even in difficult conditions like heat and dust. Women are employed both on daily wages as well as on piece rate. According to Jawaharlal Singh, Ravi Kumar Pandey and Arun Kumar Singh(2002), women workers face disadvantages compared to men in their search for employment, wages, certainties and regularities of the employment. They do not possess much of skill, training and education for the type of work they perform. Thus, women in the unorganized sector are oppressed sections of the society as they live under subdued conditions with family and children, devoid of proper living and working conditions, even they receive humiliating treatment from the contractors.

The double burden of work is even more arduous when they have to perform a caretaker role at home as well as long hours to obtain a subsistence wage at the work place. A caretaker role of women is less visible and less recognized by the society. Various studies have drawn the effects of the gendered division of labor, and in most cases there was a notable difference between the time men and women contribute to unpaid labor (Ari, Kevin, Ala-Mursula, Pentti, Kivimaki & Vahtera, 2004). Sona Mitra analyzed the double burden of work states according to which women spend more hours on care of children, old and the sick at home and household maintenance compared to less than four hours spent by men, which burden on women of dual responsibilities of managing paid and unpaid work (Mitra, 2015).

Above cited studies indicate women's status in unorganized sector. The conditions of home-based and domestic workers may be worsened and attract all attention. Therefore, the study aims to understand problems faced by home-based and domestic workers.

### **1.12.2 Justification of Sample of the Study**

Women working in the unorganized sector are much marginalized and hence deserves special mention. Women workers in the unorganized sector are the most vulnerable working segments in society. As women came from a marginalized population whose' legal, economic and political status limit their ability to demand their rights. These women include home-based and domestic workers whose social and economic contributions to society are invisible to the public, the law and policy makers of the country.

**1.12.2.1 Home-based women workers.** Home based women workers are part of the informal economy. They are usually referred to the workers who carry out remunerative work in their homes or nearby place. The term "home-based workers" cover a range of people, mainly women, who work at home regardless of their exact conditions of employment. Home based work encompasses a wide diversity. From traditional embroidery and weaving, home based work today extends to some of the latest sectors such as computers and tele-work. Home based workers may work in the new economy (assembling micro-electronics) or the old (weaving carpets); they can be in the rural areas as well in the urban. Primarily, the term "home-based workers" refer to two types of workers:

(1) Self-employed home-based workers who assume all the risks of being independent operators. They procure raw materials, supplies, and equipment, as well as pay utility and transport costs. Also, they sell their goods, mainly to local customers and Indian as well as International markets. Most do not hire others but may have unpaid family members work with them.

(2) Sub-contracted home-based workers (called home workers) are contracted by an individual entrepreneur or a firm, often through an intermediary. They are usually given the raw materials and paid per piece. They typically do not sell the finished goods. They do, however, cover many costs of production: workplace, equipment, supplies, utilities, and transport.

"Homeworker" is also the term currently in use by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and is generally understood to mean those working at home who are dependent on employers or intermediaries for work. However, it is not uncommon to see the terms used interchangeably among those working in the field in different parts of the world (Jhabvala & Jane, 1996) and unpaid workers in family businesses.

Home-based work represents a considerable share of total employment all over the globe, and particularly represents a larger share of women's employment compared to men (WIEGO, 2018). The 61<sup>st</sup> round of National Sample Survey Organization data reveals the presence of approximately 4.2 million domestic workers in India (NSSO, 2006) and approximately 37.50 million home-based workers in India of which 16.04 million workers were women (NSSO, 2012). Most of these are from marginalized communities like Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Caste, Dalits or landless OBCs. Nearly all of them are migrant workers. And an overwhelming number are women. But there exists not a single law that specifically deals with women's issues in the unorganized sector. The NSS defines status of workers in various categories. Home based workers broadly correspond to workers with status of own account workers in household enterprise, self-employed as employer and unpaid family workers. These statuses have varied implications denoting a vertical hierarchy of workers within home-based workers. Almost one third of home-based women workers are working without being paid anything for this.

Home-based work is perceived as work with less economic value and low waged all over the world. Home-based work is considered to be a means of earning for women and its roots can be traced back from history for instance thread making, weaving, dairying, basket making were such kind of work which was carried out from home; since a large number of home-based workers are women, the work performed by them is further undervalued. The SEWA survey of 2014 in Ahmadabad both show that the home-based workers are integrated into global supply chains and produce for export. Further the level of their payments is also done depending on the quality of work that they do and therefore there is no steady or fixed income in home-based work. The SEWA study quotes women saying that the contractor never paid full wages to them and always cut wages in case of delay in meeting his demand, even if they had a legitimate reason like illness. In all these cases, it is amply clear that the situation of the home-based

workers is very precarious and dependent on a direct and regular supply of wages in cash. There is a scarcity of studies on home-based women workers' problems at workplace. Moreover, few studies suggest that conditions of home-based workers are not good.

**1.12.2.2 Domestic women workers.** According to WIEGO(2018), most domestic workers are from the weaker sections of the society and migrate to other cities for the work (WIEGO, 2018). The 61<sup>st</sup> round of National Sample Survey Organization data reveals the presence of approximately 4.2 million domestic workers in India (NSSO, 2006). The contribution of the workers in this sector is rarely computed within the economy and their problems are scarcely documented.

Domestic Workers include full-time worker, part-time workers, and live-in workers. The Draft National Policy on Domestic Workers as recommended by the Taskforce on Domestic Workers provides a definition of a domestic worker as: "For the purpose of this policy, the "domestic worker" means, a person who is employed for remuneration whether in cash or kind, in any household through any agency or directly, either on a temporary or permanent, part time or full time basis to do the household work, but does not include any member of the family of an employer.

Conditions of domestic women workers too are bad. Rani and Saluja (2017) identified lack of formal contracts with workers, organizational structure, legislative protection, and inadequate welfare measures like provision for weekly holidays, maternity leave and health benefits as the key issues that need to be addressed. Also, domestic women workers have poor bargaining power. The lack of regulatory measure has led to countless violations of domestic workers' rights, including working hours, job insecurity, torture, and incarceration. Mental, physical or sexual abuse of these women is not uncommon. Even cases of torture, beatings and sexual assault are also very common. Further, prejudice and bias related to social status (as most domestic women workers come from marginalized community) is reflected very strongly at the workplace for many domestic workers. The employer has no legal binding obligations towards them. Most of the domestic workers are barely of legal working age and their wages are many times less than the minimum fixed wages by the government. Few states have fixed minimum

wages; however, the wage rate fixed is very low and irrelevant to those working in urban areas where the cost of living is much higher (Das & Usami, 2017; Srija, 2014). Thus far, there is no national law that governs domestic and home-based employment. Therefore, it is imperative to study problems faced by domestic women workers.

Researcher did not find adequate researches on problems faced by home-based and domestic women workers, especially in the Vadodara city. There have been few studies done by SEWA in Ahmedabad. Considering the context, the sample under the present study is well-justified and defined. Considering the context, present study focuses to understand problems faced by home-based women workers and domestic women workers from Vadodara.

### **1.12.3 Significance of the Study in the Department of Extension and Communication**

A study on problems faced by home-based and domestic women workers in relation to selected variables is pertinent to the Department of Extension and Communication. The major objective of the department is to extend knowledge about various family and social issues and especially those of women. It has been engaged in disseminating knowledge regarding women's empowerment. The Department of Extension and Communication also takes up action projects and researches in thrust areas like, education, health, environment, poverty etc. The department can likewise extend results and implications of the present study to a society at large.

The results of the present study would provide a guidance to prepare action plan for the advocacy programme for home-based & domestic workers' rights. As in Adult Education course students conduct field work with women to spread awareness, to sensitize, to train etc. the study with regard to this, can serve as a base to plan a programme or project specially for women to make them aware about their rights as unorganized workers and sensitize them to raise their voice for the same. Further, the department has conducted many seminars and workshops on issues of women in the past. The findings of the research can be used to organize seminar or workshop in future.

In view of the foregoing paras, it is justifiable to conduct a study on the problems faced by home-based and domestic workers with support and encouragement of the Department of Extension and Communication, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara.

#### **1.12.4 Justification of Variables**

In the history of human development, women have played equally vital role in the development of the society as men. The higher status for working women and work performed by them in a society is a significant indicator of a nation's overall progress. There are many reasons and problems that forced Indian's women to work (Bharti, Arab, and Masoumi, 2016). The financial demands on the Indian families are increasing day by day (Kumar, 2015). The cost of living in India is raising which forces every family in India to look for alternative ways of increasing overall household income (Dashora, 2013). As a result, women in India who were mostly known as homemakers are forced to go for jobs.

Women workers in India are faced with lot more challenges than their counterparts in the other countries (Bharti, Arab, and Masoumi, 2016). Research on informal sectors have revealed that workers especially women working in informal sectors face multiple problems. It exposes workers to various challenges, abuse and violation of their rights. It exposes the workers' limited access to justice.

The present study has been undertaken to study problems faced by home-based and domestic women workers in respect to their Marital Status, Education, Age, Duration of Work, Daily Work Engagement and Attitude of Women Towards Their Work.

**1.12.5.1 Marital status.** Women's marital status has important role in receiving work contract, ability to manage work load, and vulnerability to abuse and other challenges. Married women face dual burden of managing home as well as work to earn livelihood. Various conditions force married women to take up work, either home-based or domestic. Usually, married working women have children, family responsibilities in addition to work responsibilities. Imbalanced work in performing dual responsibility leads to stress which can affect both the mental health status of women and their work life. Though findings of study conducted on working and non-working women to examine effect of anxiety level on life satisfaction by Kaur et. al. (2011), reported that Females those who are working and married, are low on anxiety with higher life satisfaction in comparison to the non-working married females. But this also depends upon women's attitude towards their work. As study further revealed that

married working women perceived their life as challenging and secure, they feel comfortable with their life situations compared to married non-working women.

In India, women choices are subject to questioning. Women's choice to be single is not socially accepted hence confront numerous challenges. Despite increased acknowledgement of gender equality as a social good, there are some areas where the practice of women's autonomy is apparently inconsistent with the normative prescriptions (Budgeon, 2016). Widow women face multitude of problems. Indian social norms put prohibitions on widows that act as barriers for working women. In case of divorced women, she has to pay significant social costs of consequences from their familial to social life as she loses her status and has to depend on semi-skilled or unskilled work for survival (Rathi & Puchauri, 2018).

Women who are single, married, divorced and widow commonly face problems, however, range of problems and intensity vary based on their marital status. Considering the nature of unorganized sector, the kind of relationship and ability to negotiate determine fulfilling of the demands on the goodwill of the employer (Mehta, 2012). Therefore, marital status of women has influence on their work and work-life balance and included as one of the variable to understand its effect in relation to problems faced by home-based and domestic women workers.

**1.12.5.2 Education.** Education plays a vital role to get job and shape human responses to the world around. It also contributes to the kind of job one gets. Mainly the way in which education contributes to the employability, acquisition of knowledge and skills, increases the job opportunities. Education also creates awareness about their rights and sensitize about steps to be taken in case of violation of rights take place. Research suggests that most home-based and domestic workers are less educated and belongs to marginalized community. This increases the possibilities of various kinds of abuse particularly with women workers.

ILO (2011) suggests that nearly 90 percent of domestic workers in India are women or children (especially girls), ranging from ages 12 to 75. The majority of home-based and domestic workers are illiterate. In India, the stigma linked to domestic work is heightened by the caste system, since tasks such as cleaning and sweeping are associated with the people belonging to the 'so-called' low castes. Domestic workers are commonly referred to as 'servants' or 'maids' which in just, and gives a sense of inferiority to them (NDWM, 2010; UNDP, 2012). This has further added to the undignified status awarded to the services provided by them.

Education is foremost important to get employment in organized sector. The present study is on women working in “unorganized sector” which is also termed as “informal sector. People with lack of education or with no education are forced to enter in informal sector for fulfilling their socio-economic needs. Education is the factor which determines the decision to work in the unorganized sector (Gerxhani, 2004). To examine the differences between the level of education and the problems faced by women is important to know whether education makes differences in work life and personal life of women working in unorganized sector. Therefore, present study takes up education status as a variable to study problems faced by home-based and domestic women workers.

**1.12.5.3 Age.** Age is important factors that provide an understanding of the person’s vulnerability and capability to work. Further age also indicates employability status. Raju (2006) mentioned in the research that about 46 per cent of usual status women workers in the *age*-group 15–59 in urban *India* were self-employed out of which 69 per cent were *home-based*. Slightly less than 50 per cent of the urban self-employed women were unpaid (family workers). Neetha (2009) find that unpaid women workers are not counted in women’s work’s participation rate.

Age provides an idea of the nature of problems and challenges faced by working women. Problems may be different at different age level. As Patel (1980) reported in her study young women may be very active and their energy level to work may be high while women at the old age may face health problems, problems related to performing specific tasks, working for long hours etc. Age is also important determinant for ability to learn new skills and adjustment with the environment. Further, age also influence developing attitude towards work.

The purpose of including age as a variable is to classify problems face by home-based and domestic women workers based on age and understand whether age has correlation or not.

**1.12.4.4 Duration of Work (in Years).** This is critical variable in terms of understanding the work context, stability and tolerance to problems and challenges faced by home-based and domestic women workers. ILO (2016) in the report, “Wage Indicator,” presents that women often do not get work opportunities and hence remain in the same job which increases vulnerability to various abuses. Further, duration of work influence extends to which they experience problems and their ability to identify problems and coping with them.

Sengupta(2010) observed that the tasks performed by women are usually those that require them to be in one position for long periods of time, which can adversely affect their reproductive health. Rajalakshmi(2005) observed through a study that women work as hard as men, perhaps even more, considering the burden of household duties and rearing children. They work mainly in the textile, garments and carpet clusters. More women than men report injuries at work. Two-thirds of the women say that the average duration of maternity leave is 90 days, but without remuneration. Various studies on home-based workers suggest duration of work adversely affect women's life. Women who do home-based work regularly suffer from health hazards like backaches and failing eyesight.

Apart from above data, it is also interesting to understand whether duration of work has influence on the problems faced by them and their ability to cope with them effectively. Women with considerable work experience may have skills to deal with problems compared to women with short duration of work. Women with short duration of work may find difficulties in identifying the problems. And if they identify the problems, they are not equipped to cope up with the problems. Less work experience might imply relatively less problems or able to recognize problems to less extent.

Domestic and home-based women workers 'work experience is crucial to understand their experience at workplace, types of problems faced and coping strategies they use in order to cope with problems.

**1.12.4.5 Daily work engagement (in Hours).** Work engagement is important variable as home-based and domestic workers are highly exploited and denied just wages and human working conditions. According to Lahiri (2017) Indian women do about 35 hours of housekeeping chores a week while Indian men do two -- the worst country ratio. Indian women do about 15 times more housework than Indian men, as per the 2014 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development report. The vast majority of home-based and live-in domestic workers work a minimum of 9 to 15 hours a day, seven days a week. Part-time workers often work for nearly 8-10 hours every day. The working hours of home-based and domestic workers can go from 8 to over 18 hours a day. Wages, leave facilities, medical benefits, and rest time are at the employer's mercy (ILO, 2015). Further, most of the work that women engage are of higher

risk and requires hard work compared to men (Monisha & Rani, 2016). Chatterjee (2009) pointed out the irregular work, long hours of work, and little or no bargaining power amongst other as reasons for vulnerability of the unorganized women workers (Chatterjee, 2009).

In the unorganized sector women are engaged in activities such as taking care of livestock, milking, forestry, fishing, plantation, construction work, beedi making, bangle making, pottery, embroidery, stitching and so (Borah, 1999; Socioeconomic survey, 2017). Most of the women work as casual labourers in agriculture, construction, brick-making, coir, or as own account workers in handloom weaving, basket weaving and vending fish/ vegetables. Some of the newer activities are floriculture, poultry and livestock rearing, garment making, food processing and fish processing etc.

Pande (2008) pointed out that the long hours, and daily work conditions affect women's health adversely. In spite of their ill-health, they are left with no option to take rest but to continue working. A study in a rice-growing belt of coastal Maharashtra by Sengupta (2010) found that women in gold mines work in very poor conditions. They have to work beyond working hours, even in advanced stages of pregnancy, and there is no leave facility. As a result, majority of births were either premature or stillbirths and recorded very high infant deaths (Sengupta, 2010, as cited in Agrawal, 2015).

Usha (2008) observed that many women are exploited by the fellow male workers, owners as well as by the customers. The women are not ready to complain with any of the formal bodies since they may lose their job due to this complaint. They feel that any of their colleagues or their friends and family members will not support them in such a critical situation. So, they do not lodge complaint in any of the available forums. It is reported that some of them leave the job due to the exploitative behaviour of the colleagues, and employer. Therefore, it is important to know type of work women are engaged daily which would help understand their work context.

As per the labour law, minimum wages are fixed by some state Government including Gujarat. However, such law is seldom exercised. Therefore, it is important to understand the gravity of the issue related to work engagement.

#### **1.12.4.6 Attitude of women towards their work from social perspective**

Attitude is defined as a psychological construct, a mental and emotional entity that inheres in, or characterizes a person (Richard,2016).According to Wood (2000) attitude is complex and an acquired state through experiences. It is individual's predisposed state of mind and a responsive expression toward a person, place, thing, or event which in turn influences the individual's thought and action (Ahmed, 2017). It can be individuals' actions, behaviours, intelligence, feelings and emotions including their personal beliefs towards many things (Gunasi &Ibrahim, 2018). Prominent psychologist Gordon Allport(1935) described this latent psychological construct as "the most distinctive and indispensable concept (Gordon, 1935). Attitude can be formed from a person's past and present" (ibid).

Demographic factors (e.g., marital status, education, socio-economic status) may moderate trends in attitudes amongst women over time. For example, perhaps married women may work for long duration to earn more and provide economic support to the family than unmarried women. Another potentially important moderator is education. Many researches have pointed out that the majority of women workers are less educated and belong to marginalized section of the society. Educated women may voice their rights compared to less educated women. Therefore, their beliefs and attitude toward work may vary. The research conducted by Mahadevia, Mishra and Vyas(2014) demonstrates that younger people have more positive attitudes towards women working outside their homes than do older people. Socio-economic status could also affect changing attitudes over time. For example, women whose family supports their work may have different attitude toward work compared to those women who work for their kids despite opposition from the family.

Quality of work and past work experience may form beliefs. Women who have performed well may have positive attitude towards work. Positive attitude toward work may help women to cope up with their day to day problems/challenges. Also, past positive experience at work influence their attitude toward work. Women who often experience pressure from

employer or any kind of torture may develop negative attitude towards work which reduce the quality, productivity and ability to cope with problems.

There exists scarcity of Indian researches that capture women's (working in unorganized sector) attitude and perspectives towards their work. The data on the attitude of women towards their work from social perspective would help understand their perspective and provide insights for developing action plan to ensure protection of women's rights at workplace.

### 1.13 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the **Work Profile** of the women home based workers and women domestic workers working in unorganized sector in Vadodara.
2. To study the **Problems** Faced by women home based workers and women domestic workers working in Vadodara in relation to following aspect:
  - a. **Work related problems**
  - b. **Personal problems**
3. To study the significant differences in the **Work Related Problems** faced by women home based workers and women domestic workers working in unorganized sector in Vadodara in relation to their:
  - a. Marital status
  - b. Education
  - c. Age
  - d. Duration of Work in Years
  - e. Daily work engagement in Hours
  - f. Attitude of women towards their work from social perspective
4. To study the significant differences in the **Personal Problems** faced by women home based workers and women domestic workers working in unorganized sector in Vadodara in relation to their:
  - a. Marital status
  - b. Education
  - c. Age
  - d. Duration of Work in Years
  - e. Daily work engagement in Hours
  - f. Attitude of women towards their work from social perspective

5. To study the **Overall differences in the problems** faced by women home based workers and women domestic workers working in unorganized sector in Vadodara in relation to their:
  - a. Marital status
  - b. Education
  - c. Age
  - d. Duration of Work in Years
  - e. Daily work engagement in Hours
  - f. Attitude of women towards their work from social perspective
  
6. To obtain the **Suggestions** for improving the situations of home based and domestic women workers from the women home based workers and women domestic workers, working in unorganized sector in Vadodara.

#### **1.14 NULL HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

1. There will be no significant differences in the **Work Related Problems** faced by women home based workers and women domestic workers working in unorganized sector in Vadodara in relation to their:
  - a. Marital status
  - b. Education
  - c. Age
  - d. Duration of Work in Years
  - e. Daily work engagement in Hours
  - f. Attitude of women towards their work from social perspective
  
2. There will be no significant difference in the **Personal Problems** faced by women home based workers and women domestic workers working in unorganized sector in Vadodara district in relation to:
  - a. Marital status
  - b. Education

- c. Age
  - d. Duration of Work in Years
  - e. Daily work engagement in Hours
  - f. Attitude of women towards their work from social perspective
3. There will be no significant differences in the **Overall Problems** faced by women home based workers and women domestic workers working in unorganized sector in Vadodara district in relation to their:
  - a. Marital status
  - b. Education
  - c. Age
  - d. Duration of Work in Years
  - e. Daily work engagement in Hours
  - f. Attitude of women towards their work from social perspective

### **1.15 Delimitations of the Study**

1. Study is delimited to the women home based workers and women domestic workers working/residing in Vadodara district only.
2. Study is delimited to the work profile, problems faced by the women home based workers and women domestic workers and suggestions to improve their situation in unorganized sector.

### **1.16 Assumptions of the Study**

1. Women Home Based Workers and Women Domestic Workers working in Unorganized sector face work related and personal problems in their life.
2. Women Home Based Workers and Women Domestic Workers have their own suggestions to improve their situation in the unorganized sector.

3. Women Home Based Workers and Women Domestic Workers have particular attitude towards their work from social perspective.

### **1.17 Operational Definitions of the study**

1. Women home based workers are those who are performing their work i.e. beedi rolling, embroidery work, incense stick making, toran making, rakhi making etc. at their home and not in the premises of the employer.
2. Domestic women workers are those who are performing work like cooking, cleaning, dusting, mopping, washing clothes and vessels, and helping in other home drudgery to the employer.