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## Unorganized Women Workers in Karnataka: Understanding the Occupational Vulnerability

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***Abstract:** Unorganized sector constitutes a pivotal part of the Indian economy. More than 90 per cent of workforce and about 50 per cent of the national product are accounted for by the informal economy. A high proportion of socially and economically underprivileged sections of society are concentrated in the informal economic activities. Informal employment is generally a larger source of employment for women than for men in the developing world. In Asia, the proportion of women and men non-agricultural workers in informal employment is roughly equivalent to Women and Men in the Informal Economy. The informal economy in India employs about 86 per cent of the country's work force and 91 per cent of its women workers. Many of these women workers are primary earners for their families. Their earnings are necessary for sheer survival. Low income women workers, especially in the informal sector form one of the most vulnerable groups in the Indian economy.*

*The reasons for their vulnerability are like irregular work, low economic status, lack of control over earnings etc., Unequal gender relations play a very important role in defining their insecurities. Given their vulnerable status at home and at work, income generation alone may not improve the socio-economic status of women attached to the informal sector. The present study aims at understanding the degree of vulnerability of the unorganized women workers in India. Towards fulfilling the objective, a small study has been conducted in the State of Karnataka, to find out the realities. Results suggest that a highly visible percentage of occupational group irrespective of their monthly average income, continue to face multiple constraints which otherwise compel them to live a life full of compromises.*

**Key words:** Degree of Vulnerability, Informal Sector, Gender Discrimination, Migration, Women Workers.