



## WORKING CONDITIONS OF WOMEN WORKERS IN FRUIT PROCESSING UNITS: A STUDY OF RATNAGIRI DISTRICT

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### ABSTRACT

*It is an open truth that working women have to face problems just by virtue of their being women. A woman's work is not merely confined to paid employment. She has to almost always shoulder the burden of household responsibilities as well. Social attitude to the role of women lags much behind the law. A woman should still bear up with these problems even if she has control over the money she earns.*

*Statistics shows that the percentage of working population in unorganized or informal sector and working women in particular is comparatively more. This scenario exists in the entire world as well as in India. However, unorganized sector suffers from cycles of excessive seasonality of employment, majority of the unorganized workers does not have stable durable avenues of employment, the workplace is scattered and fragmented, there is no formal employer-employee relationships, working conditions are improper, wages are much below the standards, there is no provision of social security benefits, unorganized workers do not receive sufficient attention from trade unions, and there is inadequate and ineffective labour laws and standards relating to unorganized sector.*

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*Being more than 90% of the contributors in unorganized sector women deserve a separate mention as they are much marginalized. Women workers in the fruit processing units are also belonging to the same category. So, various problems mentioned above are more or less same in respect of them. The research work presented in this paper was carried out for women workers in the fruit processing units operating in Ratnagiri district and mainly deals with one of the above issues i.e. working conditions.*

**Keywords:** Unorganized or Informal Sector, Fruit Processing Units, Women Workers, Working Conditions.

## **1. INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **1.1 Introduction**

It is found that majority of the working class in India is engaged in unorganized sector, in which the number of women is more. Unorganized sector consisting of all unincorporated private enterprises owned by individuals or households engaged in the production or sale of goods and services; and operated on a proprietary or partnership or any such other basis. Unorganized or informal sector may be broadly characterized as consisting of units engaged in the production of goods or services with the primary objective of generating employment and incomes to the persons concerned (Husmanns, Ralf, 2003). These units typically operate at a low level of organization, with little or no division between labour and capital as factors of production and on a small scale. Labour relations where they exist are based mostly on casual employment, kinship or personal and social relations rather than contractual arrangements with formal guarantees. The labour force in the unorganized sector can be categorized in four groups in terms of occupation, nature of employment, especially distressed categories and service categories. A variety of work or jobs are coming under these categories and a large population is engaged in this sector. The unorganized labour is overwhelming in terms of its number range and therefore they are omnipresent throughout India (NSC, 2012a).

Amongst the characteristic features of this sector are ease of entry, smaller scale of operation, local ownership, uncertain legal status, labour-intensive and operating using lower technology based methods, scattered and fragmented workplaces, flexible pricing, less sophisticated packing, absence of a brand name, unavailability of good storage facilities and an effective distribution network, inadequate access to government schemes, finance and

government aid, lower entry barriers for employees, a higher proportion of migrants with a lower rate of compensation, seasonality of employment and lesser job security, exploitation and harassment, no leaves and paid holidays, poor working conditions, informal employer–employee relationships, poor trade unionism and collective bargaining, less or no protection against unfair or illegal practices and many more. Both men as well as women labours employed in various unorganized sectors are facing from several problems (Rapaka, Satya Raju, 1989).

However, the paramount importance of unorganized sector in the economy from the point of view of not only its contribution and share but also for sustaining the livelihood and well being of a large section of population is well recognized. It was estimated that in the year 2005 out of the 458 million persons were employed in India, 86% or 395 million worked in the unorganized sector, generating 50.6% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In the year 2011-12 453.13 million people were engaged in the informal sector, the percentage of which was 92.92. And in the year 2016-17 about 521.96 million people are engaged in the informal sector, which constitutes 93.90% of the total workforce employed (Vikaspedia, InDG). The alarming expansion of informal or unorganized sector, in recent times, has adversely affected employment and income security for the larger majority of the workforce, along with a marked reduction in the scale of social welfare or social security programme. While informal sector is fast expanding, the organized sector is shrinking. Contract, casual, temporary, part-time, piece-rated jobs and home based work etc. are increasingly replacing permanent jobs (NCEUS, 2008).

Women remained major players in the unorganized sector in India. Most of the women are found to be employed in agricultural activities including agro-based industries like fruit processing units and in the unorganized sector. The employment of women is high in the unorganized sector such as part time helpers in households, construction center, tanneries, match box and bidi industries etc. Women's contribution to agriculture whether it be subsistence farming or commercial agriculture when measured in terms of the number of tasks performed and time spent, is greater than men. Women have to face at home forces them to work for meager wages and without social security. In the light of the above discussion, it can be said that the women working in unorganized sector are living far below from satisfaction. Therefore, women working in the unorganized sector deserve a separate mention as they are much marginalized. The International Labour Organization (ILO) rightly

said that women represent 50% of the population, 30% of the labour force, perform 60% of all working hours, receive 10% of the world's income, and own less than 1% of the world's property. It is the need of the hour that employers, government and NGOs must come forward to improve the conditions of these women. The trade union and voluntary organizations can play a vital role in making them conscious of welfare, health, safety, education and above all their rights and this can be done only with the joint efforts of the employers, government, NGOs and common people. Much remains to be done for the betterment of these beautiful creations of god.

In the recent years number of fruit processing units in the Konkan region and in particular in Ratnagiri district are increased. Large numbers of employment opportunities are made available to the local residents. Both, men and women are employed in these units. In this the percentage of women is more. Though seasonal and casual in nature they are made available with employment and thereby source of earning. No doubt, empty hands of the rural women are offered with work. They started earning money. At the same time they are facing from several problems as well. Women working in fruit processing units are working in poor conditions, their employment is of seasonal nature, they are lowly paid, and also facing certain social and economic problems. Therefore, it is important to provide a platform for the discussion on the above mentioned issues. The study of working conditions in fruit processing units in Ratnagiri district is an attempt to understand the opinions and thereby level of satisfaction of women workers in respect of it. So far as the women workers in fruit processing units in Ratnagiri district are concern, till the date not a single attempt is made to undertake such a kind of study. Hence, this study titled "WORKING CONDITIONS OF WOMEN WORKERS IN FRUIT PROCESSING UNITS: A STUDY OF RATNAGIRI DISTRICT" is quite justified and worthwhile.

## **1.2 Review of Literature**

There are research works, books, journals, and articles that have variety of literature on workers working in unorganized sector. Some researches are specially meant for women workers and their problems. The researcher has reviewed around 90 different types of literature for the purpose of his research work. Following is the selected literature quite relevant to the subject of research.

(Palwe, V. S., 1991), in his research work carried out for seasonal and migrant labours in sugar factories in Pathardi taluka, in which he found that the socio-economic life of these

workers is adversely affected because of the nature of their employment and working conditions. (Patil, V. A., 2002), in his research work carried out for seasonal workers in sugar factories from Kolhapur district pointed out various problems related to terms of employment, wage payments, working conditions, socio-economic life etc. (Tessy, Kurian, 2000), conducted research for studying quality of life of the women workers from the plantation sectors in Kerala and concluded that physical quality of life of these women is far from satisfactory. (Wadkar, B. N., 1998), during his for labours in selected small-scale industries in Sangli district observed various problems of psychological, social and economic nature. (Waghela, S. S., 2013), in her research work for women employees in selected small-scale industrial units from Kalyan-Dombivali MIDC area in Thane district portrayed various problems faced by women employees. (Eshwar, Raagini, 2012), in her research discussed and pointed out problems related to employment, conditions of employment, and socio-economic status of female workers from traditional small-scale industries in Jaipur city. (Patil, P. G., 1990), conducted a sociological study of sugarcane cutter from Karad taluka studied social as well as economic aspects of life of the sugarcane cutter and found some typical problems. (Bandopadhyaya, N., 1985), in his book pointed out various issues in different unorganized or informal sectors of India; and has highlighted working conditions and listed out sector wise problems of women workers. (Chandela, L. M., 1995), in his book discussed the state of condition of women working in unorganized sector in India and pointed out certain social as well economic problems of women workers along with working conditions. (Nalini, B., 2009), in her book produced a gender based study of unorganized sector in India and necessarily focused on to the working conditions and health status of labours in unorganized sector. (Abhishek, Tiwari, P. and Mishra, A., 2014), have made an attempt in their research paper discussed the conditions of women laborers in unorganized sectors like agriculture, industry, small workshops like shoe makers, garment makers and embroiderers and services like local transport, shops, domestic servants, community services like street cleaning, street vendors, garbage collectors etc. in Indian perspectives. (Dave, Vandana, 2012), in her research paper discussed socio-economic conditions of women labours in construction, agriculture laborers and domestic helpers working in the unorganized sectors from urban and rural areas of three districts of Haryana. (Masood, Hajra and Jahan, Qaiser, 2015), in their research paper on women workers in unorganized sectors like construction workers and domestic helpers from Okhala region in South Delhi and offered discussion on socio-economic conditions of women laborers. (Sivanesan, R., 2013), through his research paper

brought out socio-economic conditions of women workers in cashew industries of Kanyakumari district and also analyzed their income and expenditure pattern.

The reviews offered an idea about the working conditions, problems, status and life style of workers from unorganized sector; and provided for a platform for the research on working conditions of women workers in fruit processing units in Ratnagiri district.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

According to Census 2001 Almost 400 million people (more than 85% of the working population in India) was working in unorganized sector and of these at least 120 million were women. As per census 2011, India's working population constituted around 39% of the total population and women constituted 32% of the working population. The census survey of India 2011 indicated that there were 940 women for every 1000 men in the country, making the female population in about 48.46% of the total population. In the year 2011-12, 453.13 million people were engaged in unorganized sector, the percentage of which was 92.92. And in the year 2016-17 about 521.96 million people are engaged in unorganized sector, which constitutes 93.90% of the total workforce employed (NSC, 2012b).

Women working in unorganized sector are not included in the official statistics and their work is undocumented and considered as disguised wage work, unskilled, low paying and does not provide benefits to the workers. Women workers in unorganized sector lag behind the males in terms of level and quality of employment. Such women, when they have to perform dual of both outside employment in harsh and hostile working conditions and manage their homes, come across problems, which needs a loud hearing.

Over a period of time due to increase in general awareness among entrepreneurs, co-operative societies, and due to the encouragement given by the Government through various schemes, a number of fruit processing units either owned by private individuals or run by co-operative societies is increased. No doubt, empty hands of the rural women are offered with work. They started earning money. However, majority of the units are seasonal in nature, hence there is seasonality of jobs in case of the women workers. Moreover, they may have some social as well as economic problems. Working conditions in majority of the units are also not much satisfactory. The research work on the fruit processing units in Ratnagiri district and women workers in it is an attempt to study working conditions in the fruit processing units on the basis of the level of satisfaction of women workers in respect of working conditions i.e. welfare facilities, safety provisions, and health and hygiene provisions in particular. So far as

working women in the fruit processing units in Ratnagiri district are concern, till the date not a single attempt is made to undertake such a kind of study. Hence, this study titled "WORKING CONDITIONS OF WOMEN WORKERS IN FRUIT PROCESSING UNITS: A STUDY OF RATNAGIRI DISTRICT" is worthwhile.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

After through study of relevant literature and in the light of above preliminary discussion, following specific objective is determined.

To study the working conditions and facilities provided in fruit processing units.

#### **1.5 Hypothesis of the Study**

Based on review of the past researches and available literature, on the basis of common knowledge and personal observations, and most importantly in the light of the above mentioned objective the following null as well as alternative and descriptive hypotheses are formulated.

H0: Working conditions and facilities in fruit processing units are satisfactory.

H1: Working conditions and facilities in fruit processing units are not satisfactory.

Analysis, interpretation, and testing of hypothesis is presented in the section Discussion and Results at the end of which the results of hypothesis testing are produced followed by the section Findings, Suggestions and Conclusions wherein major and supporting findings are given with some concrete suggestions, and meaningful conclusions.

#### **1.6 Research Methodology**

For present research, actual field visits were made to various registered mango canning, cashew-nut processing, kokum and other fruit processing units from all the nine tehsils of Ratnagiri district. According to the predetermined schedule and sampling plan personal interviews were conducted and required information was collected by using structured questionnaires which was implemented on to the respondents. At the time of conducting interviews personal observations were also made by the researcher in order to understand working conditions prevailing in different units. Discussions were also made with owners or managers of the units as per the requirements.

##### **1.6.1 Sources of Data**

In the present research both primary and secondary data has been used as per the requirements by the researcher.

##### **1.6.1.1 Primary Sources**

The researcher has used interview method wherein personal interviews were conducted with the help of structured questionnaires implemented on the respondents i.e. women workers in

fruit processing units in the area of study. Predefined schedules were made for the purpose of conducting interviews of women workers. Actual observations were made and informal discussions were also carried out with the owners, managers or supervisors of the various units during the personal visits to the fruit processing units.

### **1.6.1.2 Secondary Sources**

The researcher has also utilized secondary data and for that has looked into the various relevant and reliable sources like books, magazines, newspapers, research papers and articles from journals, reports of government bodies and few others. Required data was also collected on request from the records of the office of the District Statistical Officer (DSO), District Industries Centre (DIC), Ratnagiri by actual visits. Official websites were also visited and few numbers of visits were also made to public, college, institutional and university libraries in order to get additional insight into the subject.

### **1.6.2 Sample Design and Sampling Plan**

The researcher has used the multistage and systematic sampling method for deriving required samples from the study universe. While selecting units of samples, a complete list of population units is formed. List may be formed in alphabetical, numerical or some other order. The units of population are serially numbered. And the sampling interval or sampling ratio is calculated using the following relation.

$$k = \text{Size of population} / \text{Size of sample or } k = N/n$$

Using this  $k$  value, sample units are selected from the given population. In this every number at difference  $k$  is selected from a given list of population. Fruit processing units in Ratnagiri district i.e. from all the nine tehsils like Mandangad, Dapoli, Khed, Chiplun, Sangmeshwar, Guhagar, Ratnagiri, Lanja, and Rajapur is the study universe. The study universe comprised of 230 units in all, in which 83 mango canning, 138 cashew-nut processing and 09 kokum and other products. For the present study the total population of women workers from all the units was 2165 i.e.  $N$ , and size of the sample was 50% means 1082 samples i.e.  $n$  decided to be taken. So, as per the above formula and value of  $k$ , every second woman worker from the lists prepared separately for Mango Canning, Cashew-nut Processing, and Kokum and Other units was decided to be taken as a sample for the purpose of collecting samples for the study. In the study universe the total women workers population size was 2165, divided as, 808 in Mango Canning units, 1,256 in Cashew-nut Processing units and 101 women workers in Kokum and other Products units. And as mentioned above a sample of 50% was systematically drawn from it. Accordingly, from Mango Canning units 404 women workers, from Cashew-nut Processing units 628 women workers and from Kokum and Other units 50



women workers i.e. total of 1082 were selected from the entire district which was the study universe.

### 1.6.3 Limitations of the Study

The present study is conducted for Ratnagiri district only. The fruit processing units registered with the office of District Industries Centre (DIC) were taken in to account while collecting samples. They were divided into three categories as mango canning, cashew-nut processing and kokum and other units. The database of workers provided by the units was used as the base for preparing lists of the women workers and deriving the samples. Besides this technical side, the study is restricted to the working conditions and facilities offered in the units. Lastly, the analysis and interpretations made, testing of hypothesis and conclusions drawn are entirely based on the data and information provided, opinions given by the respondents while filling up of questionnaires during the scheduled interviews with them during the process of survey conducted in the study area.

## 2. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

### 2.1 Data Analysis and Interpretation

In the following discussion, the data collected from primary and secondary sources is presented, analyzed and interpreted with the help of tables and graphs followed by hypothesis testing.

**1) Welfare Facilities / Measures:** Generally, welfare measures consist of various facilities or amenities provided to the workers at the workplace. Following table gives the classification of women workers on the basis of their level of satisfaction in respect of the various welfare facilities mentioned in it.

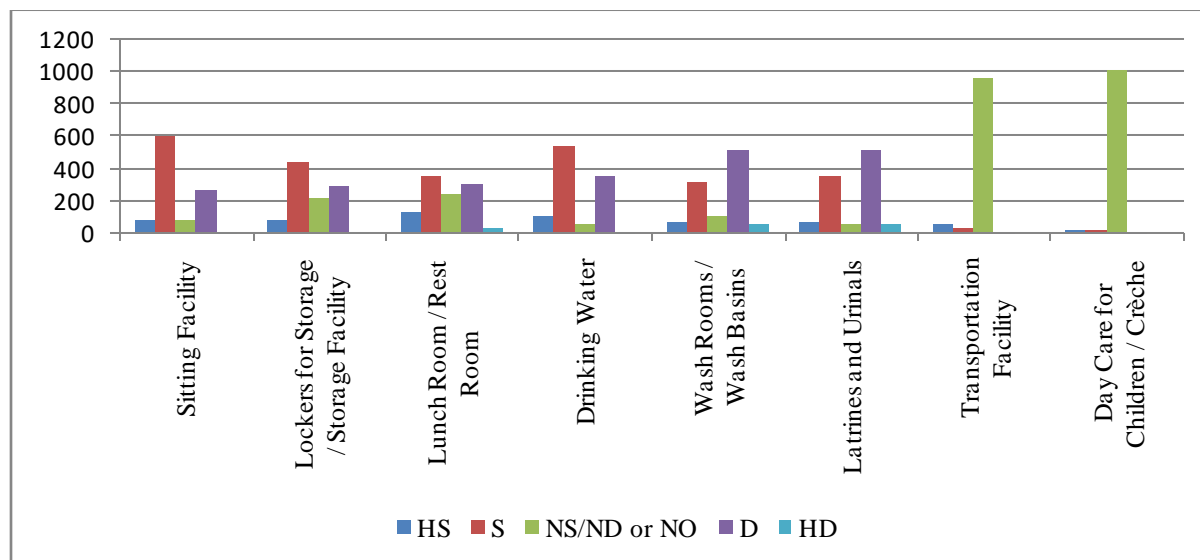
**Table 2.1 Welfare Facilities and Measures: (Availability of Facility and Opinion about Facility of Women Workers Employed in Fruit Processing Units)**

Sr. No.	Parameters / Factors	HS	S	NS/ND or NO	D	HD	Total
1	Sitting Facility	89 (08.2)	611 (56.5)	86 (07.9)	278 (25.7)	18 (01.7)	1082 (100)
2	Lockers for Storage / Storage Facility	92 (08.5)	450 (41.6)	224 (20.7)	298 (27.5)	18 (01.7)	1082 (100)
3	Lunch Room/ Rest Room	132 (12.2)	356 (32.9)	250 (23.1)	308 (28.5)	36 (03.3)	1082 (100)
4	Drinking Water	106 (09.8)	541 (50.00)	68 (06.3)	358 (33.1)	09 (00.8)	1082 (100)
5	Wash Rooms / Wash Basins	79 (07.3)	316 (29.2)	110 (10.2)	519 (48.00)	58 (05.4)	1082 (100)
6	Latrines and Urinals	78	356	65	515	68	1082

		(07.2)	(32.9)	(06.00)	(47.6)	(06.3)	(100 )
7	Transportation Facility	66 (06.1)	31 (02.9)	967 (89.4)	12 (01.1)	06 (00.6)	1082 (100 )
8	Day Care for Children / Crèche	26 (02.4)	30 (02.8)	1013 (93.6)	12 (01.1)	01 (00.1)	1082 (100 )

Source: Compiled from Primary Data

**Graph 2.1 Welfare Facilitates and Measures: (Availability of Facility and Opinion about Facility of Women Workers Employed in Fruit Processing Units)**



Thus, in case of sitting facility, storage facility, lunch room, and drinking water facility majority of the women workers are quite satisfied. But this percentage is not enough to say that the working conditions are much satisfactory. The level of satisfaction is also more in case of transportation facility and facility of day care for children where it is provided. The percentage of which is very less. And in majority of the units these facilities are not offered. On the other hand, it is to be noted that majority of the women workers are not satisfied in case of facility of wash rooms or wash basins, latrines and urinals facility. Therefore, the overall impression is that the welfare facilities and measures are not much satisfactory in majority of the fruit processing units.

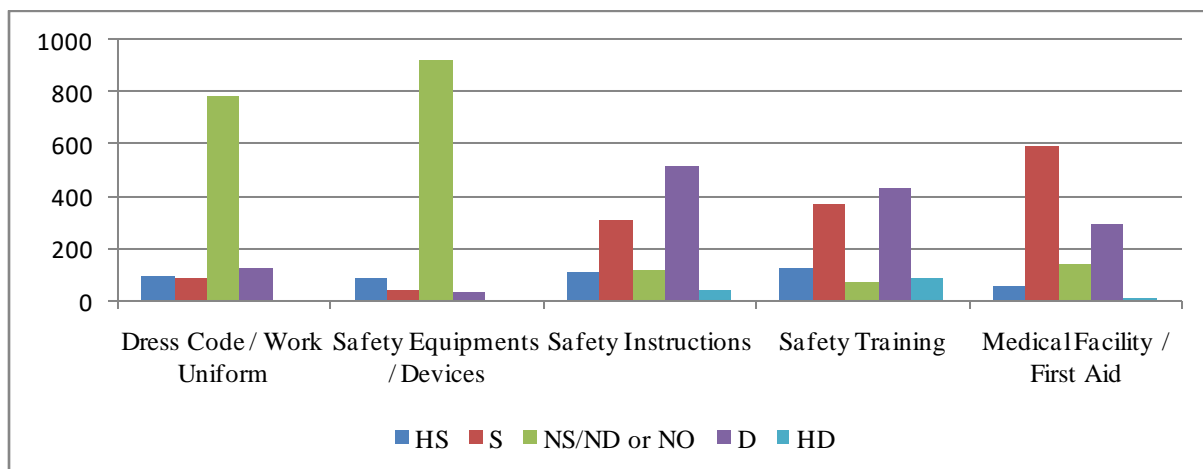
**2) Safety Provisions / Measures:** Generally, safety measures consist of various facilities or amenities provided to the workers at the workplace for smooth and safe working. It ensures safety at work, reduces the number of occasions like injuries and accidents. Following table gives the classification of women workers on the basis of their level of satisfaction in respect of the various safety measures mentioned in it.

**Table 2.2 Safety Provisions and Measures: (Availability of Facility and Opinion about Facility of Women Workers Employed in Fruit Processing Units)**

Sr. No.	Parameters / Factors	HS	S	NS/ND or NO	D	HD	Total
1	Dress Code / Work Uniform	90 (8.3)	85 (7.9)	782 (72.3)	121 (11.2)	04 (0.4)	1082 (100)
2	Safety Equipments / Devices	88 (8.1)	42 (3.9)	923 (85.3)	28 (2.6)	01 (0.1)	1082 (100)
3	Safety Instructions	108 (10)	307 (28.4)	115 (10.6)	515 (47.6)	37 (3.4)	1082 (100)
4	Safety Training	126 (11.6)	367 (33.9)	72 (6.7)	433 (40)	84 (7.8)	1082 (100)
5	Medical Facility / First Aid	55 (5.1)	590 (54.5)	142 (13.1)	289 (26.7)	06 (0.6)	1082 (100)

Source: Compiled from Primary Data

**Graph 2.2 Safety Provisions and Measures: (Availability of Facility and Opinion about Facility of Women Workers Employed in Fruit Processing Units)**



Thus, so far as safety provisions or measures are concerned, proper dress code and safety equipments are not made available in most of the units. However, wherever they are provided the women workers are quite satisfied, but this number is very less. Majority of the women workers are not satisfied with safety training and safety instructions. And in respect of medical facility or first aid women workers are much satisfied, but again this number is not big enough. Thus, the overall impression is that the safety provisions or measures in the fruit processing units are not much satisfactory.

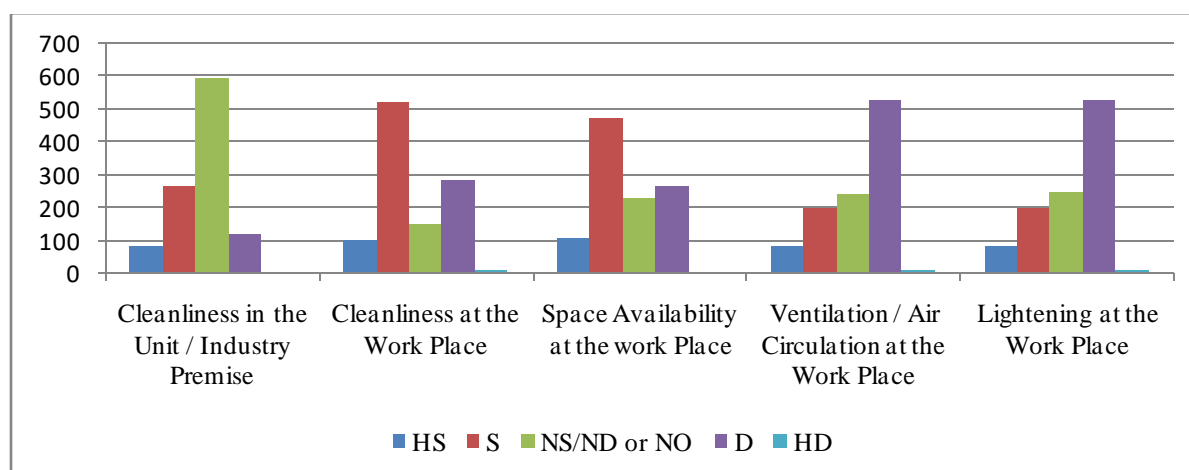
**3) Health and Hygiene Provisions / Measures:** Generally, health and hygiene measures consist of various facilities or amenities provided to the workers at the workplace in order to ensure healthy and hygienic working conditions. It mainly covers cleanliness, enough space, avoidance of overcrowding, proper ventilation and air circulation, and provision of sufficient light at the workplace etc. Following table gives the classification of women workers on the basis of their level of satisfaction in respect of the various health and hygiene measures mentioned in it.

**Table 2.3 Health and Hygiene Provisions and Measures: (Availability of Facility and Opinion about Facility of Women Workers Employed in Fruit Processing Units)**

Sr. No.	Parameters / Factors	HS	S	NS/ND or NO	D	HD	Total
1	Cleanliness in the Unit / Industry Premise	88 (8.1)	268 (24.8)	599 (55.4)	121 (11.2)	06 (0.6)	1082 (100)
2	Cleanliness at the Work Place	106 (9.8)	521 (48.2)	154 (14.2)	286 (26.4)	15 (1.4)	1082 (100)
3	Space Availability at the work Place	107 (9.9)	475 (43.9)	233 (21.5)	266 (24.6)	01 (0.1)	1082 (100)
4	Ventilation / Air Circulation at the Work Place	88 (8.1)	203 (18.8)	246 (22.7)	530 (49)	15 (1.4)	1082 (100)
5	Lightening at the Work Place	88 (8.1)	199 (18.4)	250 (23.1)	530 (49)	15 (1.4)	1082 (100)

Source: Compiled from Primary Data

**Graph 2.3 Health and Hygiene Provisions and Measures: (Availability of Facility and Opinion about Facility of Women Workers Employed in Fruit Processing Units)**



Thus, so far as health and hygiene is concerned, in respect of cleanliness in the unit or industry premise majority of the women workers could not express themselves properly. Women workers are much satisfied in respect of cleanliness at the workplace and availability

of space. But at the same time they are not much satisfied in terms of ventilation and lightening at the workplace. So the overall impression is that the health and hygiene provisions or measures in the fruit processing units are not much satisfactory.

## 2.2 Testing of Hypothesis

In order to study, analyze, and test the women workers' opinions about the working conditions the researcher has prepared three scales like welfare facilities/measures, safety provisions, and health and hygiene provisions. All these scales comprises of Likert statement, revealing employees satisfaction level for the particular facility provided by the unit. Reliability for all these scales is measured with reliability coefficient Cronbach's Alpha. For these entire scale alpha score is well above 0.7, it indicates that the scales are reliable to measure the underlined construct. Before testing the hypothesis the researcher has tested the normality of the data with Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. Results of normality test reveals that the test fail to show the normality, hence researcher has used nonparametric test for hypothesis testing. Single Sample Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test is used with median value 3. The scale used to assess sample respondent is five point scale with a mid value is 3. This is used for testing the null hypothesis that the population median of a random variable is equal to a given value M. It is assumed that the variable is symmetrically distributed about its median.

In order to test all the three scales alternative and null hypotheses are formulated for each of them. Rank tables are prepared accordingly in order to test the responses of the respondents with that of the median value. Test statistics shows the following results.

	<b>Median Value - Welfare Facilities</b>
Z	-8.486
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

The 'Z' for Welfare Facilities is -8.486 with 'P' value .000, the test is significant. The null hypothesis rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. So, it is concluded that Welfare Facilities in the fruit processing units are not satisfactory.

	<b>Median Value - Safety Provisions</b>
Z	-3.042
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.002

The 'Z' for Safety Provisions is -3.042 with 'P' value .002, the test is significant. The null hypothesis rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that Safety Provisions in the fruit processing units are not satisfactory.

	<b>Median Value – Health and Hygiene Provisions</b>
Z	-3.405
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.001

The 'Z' for Health and Hygiene Provisions is -3.405 with 'P' value .001, the test is significant. The null hypothesis rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that Health and Hygiene Provisions in the fruit processing units are not satisfactory.

Thus, three different scales like welfare facilities, safety provisions, and health and hygiene provisions are used, and hypotheses are tested accordingly. Summarized results are tabulated as follows.

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>H0: Accept or Reject</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Statistical Tool Used</b>
<b>H0: Welfare Facilities</b> in fruit processing units are satisfactory <b>H1: Welfare Facilities</b> in fruit processing units are not satisfactory	Sitting Facility, Lockers for Storage/Storage Facility, Lunch Room/Rest Room, Drinking Water, Wash Rooms/Wash Basins, Latrines and Urinals, Transportation Facility, Day Care for Children/Creche	Rejected	<b>Welfare Facilities</b> in fruit processing units are not satisfactory	Single Sample Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test
<b>H0: Safety Provisions</b> in fruit processing units are satisfactory <b>H1: Safety Provisions</b> in fruit processing units are not satisfactory	Dress Code/Work Uniform , Safety Equipments/Devices, Safety Instructions, Safety Training, Medical Facility/First Aid	Rejected	<b>Safety Provisions</b> in fruit processing units are not satisfactory.	Single Sample Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test
<b>H0: Health and Hygiene Provisions</b> in fruit processing units are satisfactory <b>H1: Health and Hygiene Provisions</b> in fruit processing units	Cleanliness in the Unit/Industry Premise, Cleanliness at the Work Place, Space Availability at the Work Place, Ventilation/Air Circulation at the Work Place, Lightening at the Work Place, Cleanliness in the	Rejected	<b>Health and Hygiene Provisions</b> in fruit processing units are not satisfactory.	Single Sample Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test

are not satisfactory	Unit/Industry Premise, Cleanliness at the Work Place			
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Thus, results of hypotheses testing are as follows.

- a) Welfare Facilities in the fruit processing units are not satisfactory
- b) Safety Provisions in the fruit processing units are not satisfactory.
- c) Health and Hygiene Provisions in the fruit processing units are not satisfactory.

### 3. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

#### 3.1 Findings

On the basis of the observations made during the survey and visits to the fruit processing units; and analysis and interpretations made after processing of the data so collected from the respondents during personal interviews with the help of questionnaire, the following findings can be given.

1. It is found that in case of sitting facility, storage facility, lunch room, and drinking water facility majority of the women workers are quite satisfied. The level of satisfaction is also more in case of transportation facility and facility of day care for children where it is provided. But in majority of the units these facilities are not offered. On the other hand majority of the women workers are not satisfied in case of facility of wash rooms or wash basins, latrines and urinals facility. Thus, the overall impression in respect of welfare facilities is not much satisfactory.
2. So far as safety provisions or measures are concerned, proper dress code and safety equipments are not made available in most of the units. However, wherever they are provided the women workers are quite satisfied. Majority of the women workers are not satisfied with safety training and safety instructions. And in respect of medical facility or first aid women workers are much satisfied. Thus, the overall impression in respect of safety provisions is not much satisfactory.
3. It is found that so far as health and hygiene is concerned, in respect of cleanliness in the unit or industry premise majority of the women workers could not express themselves properly. Women workers are much satisfied in respect of cleanliness at the workplace and availability of space. But at the same time they are not much satisfied in terms of ventilation and lightening at the workplace. Thus, the overall impression in respect of health provisions is not much satisfactory.

### **3.2 Conclusions**

India is developing country and agriculture is the backbone of Indian economy. A large variety of fruits are grown in India. Fruit and vegetable processing are the most important agriculture based activity. There are various fruit processing technologies such as canning, dehydration, pickling, provisional preservation, bottling etc. Fruit processing industries have products like Juice, Jam, Jelly, Pickle, Sarbat, Squash, Cashew Burfi, Cashew Fenny, Cashew Modak etc. Basically, economy of the Konkan region is depending upon agriculture. Agriculture system of Konkan is mainly based on pro-commercial products like Mango, Cashew, and Kokum etc. Apart from few co-operative and private limited units, many cottage scale and small-scale processing units are developing and thriving well in Konkan region which utilize large quantity of the neglected fruits for processing in different products. In Konkan, fruit processing units mean the units which are doing processing on to the locally available fruits like mango, cashew-nut, kokum and some other fruits. These units can be broadly classified into Mango Canning Units, Cashew-nut Processing Units, and Kokum and Other Units.

The economy of the Ratnagiri district is also characterized as an agricultural economy. There are manufacturing units engaged in processing of the locally available raw products from the agriculture and mainly from plantation activities. The units are called as fruit processing units, which are engaged in manufacturing of a variety of products through processing on to the locally available fruits and vegetables. These units are playing the role of employment generator for the rural and urban unemployed people. Many of these units are operating in rural areas. Hence, local residents are getting employment in these units though it is of seasonal and casual nature. Women from different villages are working in majority in these units. As majority of the units are small in size the working conditions are not that much satisfactory. Therefore, besides various problems which they are suffering from, they are continue to work in improper working conditions.

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