

A Comprehensive Multi-Dimensional Model of Challenges Faced by Women Workers in the Unorganised Sector: A Mixed-Methods Approach

M. Priya^{1*}, Dr. A. Muthumani^{2**}

¹ Ph.D Research Scholar, PG and Research Department of Commerce,

Sri S. Ramasamy Naidu Memorial College, Sattur – 626 203, Tamil Nadu, India (Affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai 625 021, Tamil Nadu, India)

² Associate professor and Head PG and Research Department of Commerce,

Sri. S Ramasamy Naidu Memorial College, Sattur 626 203, Tamil Nadu, India (Affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai 625 021, Tamil Nadu, India)

Abstract

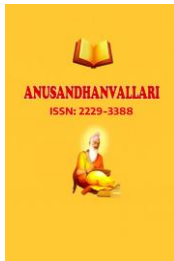
This study adopts a mixed-methods research design to explore the multi-dimensional challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector of Virudhunagar district. Combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the researcher collects data through structured surveys and in-depth interviews with a sample of 542 women workers from various sectors, including agriculture, textiles, and small-scale industries. The quantitative component captures data on employment conditions, wages, health and safety concerns, and social protection access, while qualitative insights are gathered through focus group discussions and interviews with women workers, community leaders, and NGO representatives. The study employs an inductive approach to develop a context-specific scale for measuring the challenges faced by women workers, using grounded theory for theory development. Additionally, a deductive approach is used to test existing theories and guide scale development. This combination ensures a comprehensive, reliable, and valid scale, essential for studying the complex, multi-dimensional issues in the unorganised sector. The study's findings provide valuable implications into the socio-cultural, economic, and safety challenges that shape the work environment for women in the unorganised sector and offer recommendations for policy intervention and practical solutions.

Keywords: Mixed-methods, Women Workers, Unorganised Sector, Challenges, Scale Development, Inductive Approach, Deductive Approach,

JEL code: J16, J21, J28, O15, R23, C38

Study Background

The unorganised sector in India represents a significant portion of the workforce, providing livelihoods to millions who remain outside the purview of formal employment systems. In the Virudhunagar district of Tamil Nadu, the unorganised sector is a critical component of the local economy, with a substantial number of women contributing to various industries, including agriculture, textiles, handicrafts, and small-scale trading. Despite their considerable participation, women workers in this sector face numerous challenges that hinder their economic and social development. At the same time, there are emerging opportunities that, if harnessed effectively, can enhance their livelihoods and promote gender equality.



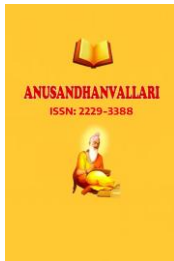
The unorganised sector, characterized by the absence of formal contracts, social security benefits, and regulated working conditions, employs a large portion of India's workforce. According to the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS), over 90% of India's labor force is engaged in unorganised employment. In Virudhunagar district, known for its vibrant industrial and agricultural activities, the unorganised sector plays a pivotal role. Women workers in this region are predominantly involved in beedi rolling, matchbox making, textile weaving, and agricultural labor. These occupations, while providing essential income, expose women to precarious working conditions, low wages, and limited access to social protection. Women in the unorganised sector of Virudhunagar district encounter multifaceted challenges. One of the primary issues is the lack of job security and formal recognition. Without formal contracts, women are often subject to irregular employment, exploitation, and arbitrary dismissal. Additionally, the absence of social security measures such as health insurance, maternity benefits, and pension schemes exacerbates their vulnerability.

Economic disparities are another critical challenge. Women workers typically receive lower wages compared to their male counterparts, reflecting deep-rooted gender biases and discrimination. This wage gap limits their financial independence and ability to invest in education and health for themselves and their families. Furthermore, the informal nature of their work often means that women have limited bargaining power and are unable to negotiate for better wages or working conditions. The working environment in the unorganised sector is also a significant concern. Many women work in hazardous conditions without adequate safety measures. For instance, beedi rolling and matchbox making involve exposure to toxic substances, posing severe health risks. The lack of awareness about occupational health and safety standards further compounds these risks. Social and cultural barriers also play a significant role in limiting women's opportunities. Traditional gender roles often confine women to certain types of work and discourage them from pursuing higher-paying or more skilled jobs. Additionally, women bear the dual burden of paid work and unpaid domestic responsibilities, leaving them with little time for skill development or education. Despite to more challenges, there are several opportunities for improving the conditions of women workers in the unorganised sector. One such opportunity lies in the promotion of self-help groups (SHGs) and cooperatives. These collective forms of organization can empower women by providing them with access to credit, training, and a platform to voice their concerns and negotiate better terms of employment.

Government initiatives and policies aimed at the unorganised sector also present significant opportunities. Programs such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and various state-specific schemes can offer social security and financial assistance to women workers. Additionally, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups play a crucial role in advocating for the rights of women in the unorganised sector and providing them with necessary support services. Skill development and education are keys to enhancing the employability and income-generating potential of women workers. Initiatives that focus on vocational training, literacy programs, and digital education can open up new avenues for employment and entrepreneurship.

Review of Literature

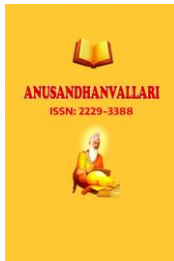
Women workers in the unorganised sector face a range of challenges that are often shaped by their socio-economic conditions, gender norms, and lack of formal protection. The unorganised sector, including agriculture, domestic work, textiles, and small-scale industries, is characterized by informal employment, lack of job security, and limited access to benefits such as healthcare, pensions, and social protection. As a result, women workers in this sector face distinct challenges that affect their livelihoods and well-being. Job Security and Wage Disparities: The



unstable nature of employment in the unorganised sector, which is often, lacks formal contracts and legal protections. Chakraborty and Ray (2018) and Kabeer (2000) have shown that women in this sector are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, with low wages and irregular payment practices. Wage disparities, especially when compared to male counterparts, remain a significant concern, Bardhan (2002), who found that gendered wage gaps are prevalent even in informal labor markets. Hazardous Working Conditions: Women workers in the unorganised sector frequently face poor working conditions, which expose them to physical, chemical, and emotional risks. Sarker and Mitra (2017) and Lama (2019) argue that hazardous working conditions in sectors such as agriculture, textiles, and construction are particularly detrimental to women's health, resulting in long-term physical and mental health issues. Social and Cultural Barriers: Social norms and cultural expectations continue to shape women's roles in the labor market. Beneria (2003) discusses how societal expectations often restrict women's access to higher-paying jobs and career advancement opportunities. Women in the unorganised sector are often expected to balance work with traditional domestic roles, which restricts their mobility and productivity. Dave (2024) Economic Empowerment and Advancement: Economic empowerment is often hindered in the unorganised sector, where women lack access to financial services, training, and career development opportunities. Nussbaum (2000) emphasizes the importance of access to education, financial resources, and career advancement opportunities in empowering women. However, the unorganised sector's lack of institutional support creates significant barriers to achieving economic independence for many women workers. Based on the review of literature, it is evident that women workers in the unorganised sector face multifaceted challenges, including job insecurity, wage disparities, hazardous working conditions, and socio-cultural barriers that hinder their economic empowerment. These challenges are shaped by the informal nature of the sector and the prevailing gender norms. The literature highlights the need for a comprehensive understanding of these issues, which this study aims to address through a multi-dimensional model. By integrating both qualitative and quantitative methods, this research will provide all-inclusive view of the unique challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector, offering valuable approach for managerial interventions. Ultimately, it contributes to the broader discourse on gender equality and economic empowerment within informal labour markets.

Problem of the study

Women workers in the unorganised sector of Virudhunagar district face an array of persistent challenges that significantly impact their livelihoods and well-being. Despite their substantial contribution to local industries such as agriculture, textiles, and small-scale trading, these women often work in precarious conditions with little to no job security, formal recognition, or access to social protection. The absence of formal contracts leaves them vulnerable to exploitation, irregular employment, and arbitrary dismissal. Economic disparities are glaring, with women typically earning lower wages than their male counterparts, reflecting entrenched gender biases. This wage gap not only limits their financial independence but also restricts their ability to invest in education and health for themselves and their families. The working environment is often hazardous, particularly in industries like beedi rolling and matchbox making, where exposure to toxic substances poses severe health risks. Additionally, a lack of awareness and enforcement of occupational health and safety standards exacerbates these dangers. Social and cultural barriers further compound the challenges faced by women in this sector. Traditional gender roles and responsibilities often limit their opportunities for skill development and higher-paying jobs, while the dual burden of paid and unpaid domestic work leaves little time for personal advancement. This study aims to identify and analyze these multifaceted challenges cultural factors that contribute to the vulnerability of women workers in Virudhunagar's unorganised sector. It also seeks to uncover potential opportunities for empowerment and



recommend strategies to improve their working conditions and overall quality of life. The research question of the present study is, the key challenges related to job security, wage disparities, hazardous working conditions, and social and cultural barriers faced by women workers in the unorganised sector.

Objectives of the Study

The study primary objective is to identify and analyze the specific challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector of Virudhunagar district. It examining issues related to job security, wage disparities, hazardous working conditions, and social and cultural barriers that limit their economic and social advancement.

Research Design

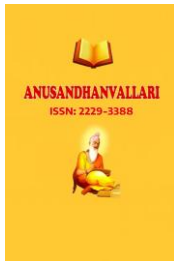
This study adopts mixed-methods of research design, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities for women workers in the unorganised sector of Virudhunagar district. Structured surveys will be administered to a representative sample of women workers across various unorganised sectors, including agriculture, textiles, and small-scale industries. The survey will collect data on employment conditions, wages, health and safety issues, and access to social protection. A total of 542 sample respondents are selected on the basis of proportionate random sampling method. The challenges faced by women workers are distinguished by different dimensions gathered through an in-depth interview and focus group discussions will be conducted with women workers, community leaders, and representatives from self-help groups and NGOs. It has provided deeper insights into the personal experiences, perceptions, and socio-cultural dynamics affecting women workers. Further the scale has been developed through by adopting both inductive and deductive approach for scientific leading the scope of the research. Scale measurement is crucial for studies addressing multi-dimensional issues, such as the challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector. By using a standardized scale, researchers ensure consistency and reliability in responses, reducing potential measurement errors and improving the study's credibility. Allows for the identification of new dimensions and constructs that may not have been previously considered. An inductive approach through grounded theory can be used to develop scales and theories from observed data. (Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. (1990). Further, the inductive approach and its relevance in theory development, including the development of measurement scales from qualitative data (Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. 1967). On the other hand, a deductive approach is often used when there are already well-established theories or models that can guide the creation of scale items. It is a method involves hypothesizing about relationships based on existing literature and then testing these hypotheses through data collection (Nunnally, J. C. ,1978).The present study is pioneering in examining the specific challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector, and there is limited prior work on this study, an inductive approach might be more beneficial. It allows the researcher to develop the scale that truly reflects the realities of the respondents, which might be more context-specific. However, the researcher not testing the existing theories about multi challenges faced by women workers in unorganised sector, the deductive approach may be more appropriate. While considering vast scope apart from that, combining both approaches is a valid strategy in current scenario. It allows for a comprehensive and balanced scale development process—using inductive methods to capture the richness of the data and deductive methods to ground the findings in existing theory. It enhances the strong and relevance of the scale for further scope in future research to the researcher. The detailed scale description presented in the Table 1 along with its reliability test conducted through pre-testing.

Table 1 Dimensions and Scale Derived from Existing study

Dimension	Scale derived existing study	Alpha
Job security 'JS'	Standing, G. (1999) – Global Labour Flexibility: Seeking Distributive Justice - Discusses precarious employment and its implications for job security, particularly in informal sectors. ILO (2018) – Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture Highlights job security issues specific to informal employment globally.	.744
Wage Disparities 'WD'	Blau, F. D., & Kahn, L. M. (2000) – Gender Differences in Pay A comprehensive analysis of wage gaps and the factors contributing to these disparities. Chen, M. A. (2012) – The Informal Economy: Definitions, Theories, and Policies Explores wage disparities and the economic conditions of informal workers, particularly women.	.817
Hazardous Working Conditions 'HWC'	Lund, F., & Marriott, A. (2011) – Occupational Health and Safety and the Poorest Examines health and safety issues faced by workers in informal economies, with a focus on women. ILO (2019) – Working on a Warmer Planet: The Impact of Heat Stress on Labour Productivity and Decent Work Discusses the unsafe working conditions in unorganised sectors and their impact on productivity.	.722
Social and Cultural Barriers 'SCB'	Kabeer, N. (1999) – Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment Focuses on how cultural and societal factors influence women's empowerment, particularly in developing countries. Sen, A. (1990) – Gender and Cooperative Conflicts Explores how cultural norms and gender roles shape economic participation and decision-making for women.	.897
Economic Advancement 'EA'	Nussbaum, M., & Sen, A. (1993) – The Quality of Life Explores economic empowerment and well-being as fundamental for marginalized groups, including women. UN Women (2016) – Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Discusses women's economic contributions and barriers to achieving financial independence in informal economies.	.763

Analysis and Discussion

The present study is purely evaluated the challenged faced by women workers engaged in unorganised sector. The researcher has derived various dimensions through previous literature as a combined new way to approach the study in addressing the issues faced by workers. In analytical point of view, 23 items scale has derived after applying the exploratory factor analysis three items are eliminated due to low loading (Hair, J et.al 1998) each



construct factors are loaded to their respective dimension, so need cross-loading found during analysis (Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). In Job security dimension 2 statements and hazardous working conditions 1 factor is eliminated. The respective KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity showing significant (Kaiser, H. F. (1974

) (the calculated KMO is .811 DF-253, Bartlett'sTest - 520.06 significant with p value less than .05. The descriptive aspects of scale after eliminating the statements mean and standard deviation provided in Table 2 with its respective dimension.

Table 2.1 Job Security

Job Security	Mean	Std. Deviation
I feel secure about retaining my current job in the near future.	3.6478	.81240
My job offers formal employment benefits such as a written contract or appointment letter.	3.5224	.86789
My employer provides support during times of financial or personal crises.	3.5821	.79575
My job provides sufficient opportunities for skill development and career advancement.	3.4239	1.03792

Table 2.2 Wage Disparities

Wage Disparities	Mean	Std. Deviation
My wages are fair compared to those earned by men in similar roles.	3.6299	.86534
I receive wages regularly and on time.	3.4925	.80368
My job pays wages in accordance with minimum wage standards.	3.4955	.82212
My wages are sufficient to meet my personal and family needs.	3.5015	.84724

Table 2.3 Hazardous Working Conditions

Hazardous Working Conditions	Mean	Std. Deviation
I work in a safe and healthy environment.	3.5701	.80437
My employer provides adequate safety equipment and training.	3.6687	.81934
The nature of my work exposes me to physical, chemical, or emotional risks.	3.5403	.81748
I receive support or compensation for any health issues arising from my work conditions.	3.6299	.77014

Table 2.4 Social and Cultural Barriers

Social and Cultural Barriers	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social stigma or traditional roles do not restrict my job choices.	3.6448	.82754
I am able to balance my work responsibilities with societal expectations of women.	3.7254	.79808
I receive equal respect and recognition as my male counterparts in the workplace.	3.6716	.75795
Cultural norms or family obligations do not hinder my opportunities for professional growth.	3.4269	1.02653

Table 2.5 Economic Advancement

Economic Advancement	Mean	Std. Deviation
My current job contributes significantly to improving my financial independence.	3.5433	.90429
I have access to financial support or credit for personal and professional needs.	3.1343	1.05954
My earnings allow me to save and invest in long-term goals.	3.2537	.90810
I feel confident about achieving economic stability through my current job.	3.3194	.92345

Tables 2.1 to 2.5 presented the various dimensions of challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector, specifically focusing on Job Security, Wage Disparities, Hazardous Working Conditions, Social and Cultural Barriers, and Economic Advancement. For Job Security, respondents reported a moderate sense of security, with the mean values ranging from 3.42 to 3.65, indicating a general feeling of stability in their jobs, though some still experience uncertainty. The lowest mean (3.42) is for opportunities for skill development and career advancement, highlighting that growth opportunities are somewhat limited. Regarding Wage Disparities, the respondents perceive their wages as fair (mean of 3.63), but there is still concern regarding the timeliness and sufficiency of wages (means around 3.49). The Hazardous Working Conditions dimension shows that while respondents generally feel their work environment is safe (mean of 3.57), there are concerns about the risks they face, as indicated by the mean of 3.54 for exposure to physical, chemical, or emotional risks. Social and Cultural Barriers reveal that respondents mostly feel free from social stigma or traditional roles (mean of 3.64) and are able to balance work with societal expectations (mean of 3.73). However, cultural norms or family obligations may hinder career growth (mean of 3.42) and in terms of Economic Advancement, while most women feel their job contributes to financial independence (mean of 3.54), access to financial support and the ability to save and invest remain challenges, as reflected by the lower means for financial support (3.13) and savings (3.25). Based on the descriptive analysis of the present study, while women in the unorganised sector experience some positive aspects of employment, significant challenges in growth, financial stability, and cultural barriers persist in the study area.

Following the descriptive statistics, the researcher has conducted Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to validate the factor structure and ensure that the scale items appropriately loaded onto their respective dimensions. The results of CFA confirmed the hypothesized model, demonstrating good fit indices, which indicate that the data supports the proposed factor structure. Additionally, the structural CFA was used to examine the relationships between the latent constructs, providing further insight into the interconnections between job security, wage disparities, hazardous working conditions, social and cultural barriers, and economic advancement. The validation of the scale through CFA ensures that the dimensions measured are both reliable and valid, offering a robust tool for assessing the challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector. The findings provide empirical support for the model, confirming the internal consistency and construct validity of the developed scale. The graphical output of the model extracted from IBM-AMOS 20 version presented in figure the former is unstandardized and later is standardised factor loading of the model .

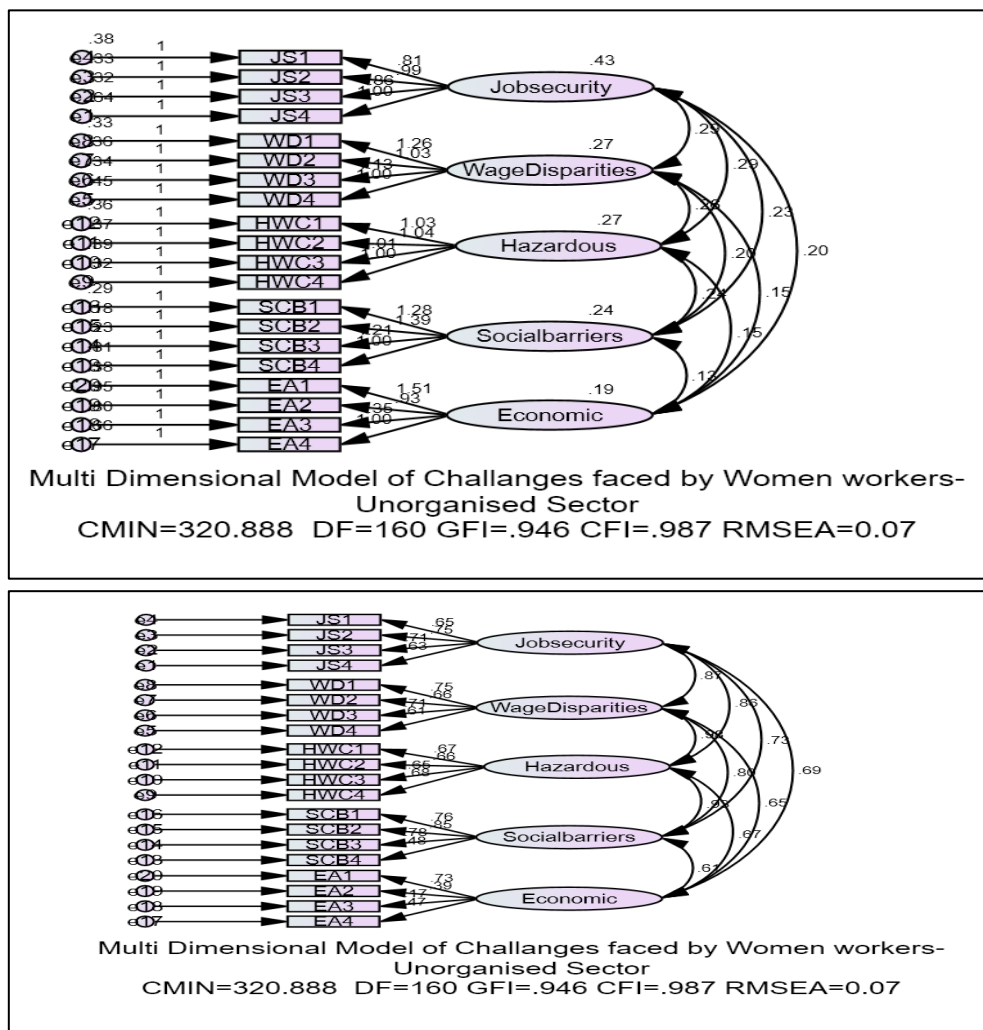


Figure 1 Unstandardized and standardized values of Pooled CFA

The model includes five latent constructs: Job Security (JS), Wage Disparities (WD), Hazardous Working Conditions (HWC), Social Barriers (SCB), and Economic Advancement (EA).

Each construct is represented by several observed variables (items), Job Security (JS) is measured by four items (JS1 to JS4), with factor loadings ranging from 0.63 to 0.74. Wage Disparities (WD) is measured by four items (WD1 to WD4), with loadings ranging from 0.66 to 0.75. Similarly, other dimensions (HWC, SCB, and EA) have corresponding items with loadings indicating how well each item represents the respective factor. High loadings (generally above 0.60) indicate that the observed variable strongly contributes to the latent construct. For example, EA1 has a factor loading of 0.73, suggesting it is a strong indicator of the Economic construct.

Model Fit Indices

CMIN (Chi-square statistic) - 320.888, with DF (degrees of freedom) = 160. It indicates how well the model fits the data, and a lower chi-square value suggests a better fit. GFI (Goodness-of-Fit Index) - 0.946, which is above the acceptable threshold of 0.90, indicating a good fit between the model and the data. Comparative Fit Index is 0.987, which is well above the recommended threshold of 0.90, suggesting an excellent fit and RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) = 0.07, which is below the threshold of 0.08, indicating a good fit and low error in approximation. The present model exhibits excellent fit indices, suggesting that the factor structure is appropriate and aligns well with the collected data from the ultimate respondents such as women workers in unorganised sector. Each dimension is clearly defined by its respective items, and the relationships between the constructs are well represented. The strong factor loadings indicate that the items are valid measures of their respective constructs, making the model reliable for assessing the challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector. The structural model graphical presentation is presented in figure 2.

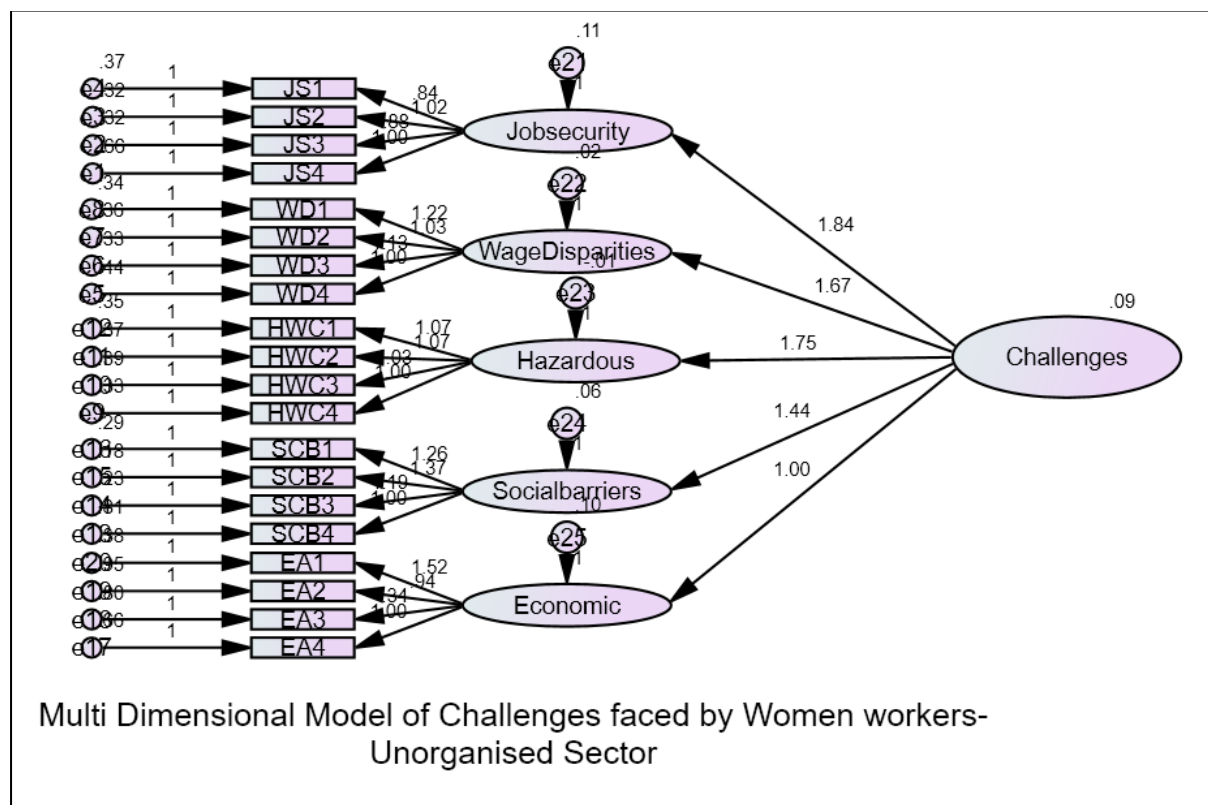


Figure 2 Unstandardized value of Structural model of CFA

The structural model in the provided figure 2 shows the relationships between the different dimensions of challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector and principal construct, Challenges. Each latent variable, representing a dimension (such as Job Security, Wage Disparities, Hazardous Working Conditions, Social Barriers, and Economic), is connected to the overall Challenges variable with significant regression coefficients. The regression co-efficient of structural model is presented in Table 3 for hypothetical testing.

Table 3 represents the path coefficients between the five dimensions (Job Security, Wage Disparities, Hazardous Working Conditions, Social Barriers, and Economic) and the main construct such as Challenges in the context of women workers in the unorganised sector. The table presents the Estimate (path coefficient), Standard Error (S.E.), Critical Ratio (C.R.), and P-value (P) for each path in the structural model, which help assess the strength and significance of these relationships. The path coefficient of 1.841 for Job Security advocates that this dimension has the highest positive impact on the Challenges construct. A Critical Ratio (C.R.) of 5.674, which is greater than the critical value of 1.96, and a P- less than 0.001, indicate that the relationship is highly statistically significant. It means that job security plays a crucial role in shaping the overall challenges experienced by women workers in the unorganised sector. Wage Disparities, with an estimate of 1.666, also shows a significant positive relationship with Challenges. The C.R. value of 5.800 is well above the critical value of 1.96, and the P-value is statistically significant. The path coefficient for Hazardous Working Conditions is 1.749, with a C.R. of 6.003, which is significant at a high level (greater than 1.96). Social Barriers, with a path coefficient of 1.439, also shows a significant positive impact on Challenges and Economic is taken as the reference construct (Estimate = 1.000) in the model, which implies that it serves as the baseline for comparisons with other dimensions. The economic challenges related to financial independence, access to credit and economic stability are fundamental to the challenges construct, though it does not have a regression coefficient to assess relative impact here.

Table 3 Multi-Dimensional Model Regression Co-efficient

Dimension	Construct	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Job security	Challenges	1.841	.324	5.674	***
Wage Disparities		1.666	.287	5.800	***
Hazardous		1.749	.291	6.003	***
Social barriers		1.439	.274	5.255	***
Economic		1.000* Reference Point			

Table 4 presents the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR) values, essential indicators for assessing the validity and reliability of the constructs in the model. For Job Security, the AVE is 0.473, slightly below the ideal threshold of 0.50, but still acceptable for exploratory research, while the CR of 0.781 indicates good internal consistency. Similarly, Wage Disparities has an AVE of 0.471 and CR of 0.780, reflecting acceptable validity and strong reliability. The Hazardous Working Conditions dimension shows an AVE of 0.515, above the 0.50 threshold, and a CR of 0.809, confirming its strong validity and reliability. Social Barriers performs well with an AVE of 0.532, indicating good construct validity, and a CR of 0.814, indicating strong reliability. Finally, Economic has an AVE of 0.445, slightly below the ideal value, but the CR of 0.758 remains acceptable. Overall, while some dimensions fall just below the 0.50 AVE thresholds, the CR values across all dimensions are above 0.70, indicating that the constructs are reliable. It supports the structural equation modelling

findings, ensuring that the dimensions measuring challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector are valid and reliable.

Table 4 Construct AVE and Construct Validity of the Model

Dimension	Construct	AVE	CR
Job security	Challenges	.473	.781
Wage Disparities		.471	.780
Hazardous		.515	.809
Social barriers		.532	.814
Economic		.445	.758

Summary of Hypotheses:

H1: Job security positively affects the challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector. (Supported)

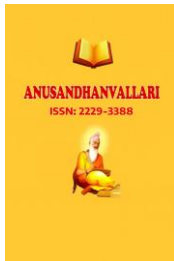
H2: Wage disparities positively affect the challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector. (Supported)

H3: Hazardous working conditions positively affect the challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector. (Supported)

H4: Social barriers positively affect the challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector. (Supported)

The path coefficients and statistical significance levels strongly suggest that all the dimensions—Job Security, Wage Disparities, Hazardous Working Conditions, and Social Barriers—significantly contribute to the overall Challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector.

The hypotheses tested in this study explored the various dimensions that influence the challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector. The results support all four hypotheses, each indicating a positive impact of the respective dimensions on the overall challenges experienced by women in this sector. The significant path coefficients and statistical significance levels confirm that Job Security, Wage Disparities, Hazardous Working Conditions, and Social Barriers all have a considerable influence on the challenges faced by women workers. Job Security is a critical factor that shapes the challenges experienced by women in the unorganised sector. The positive relationship between job security and challenges suggests that women who perceive greater job security are more likely to experience fewer challenges in their work environments. However, women in precarious employment situations face heightened challenges due to instability and a lack of formal support mechanisms. It emphasizes the importance of ensuring more secure work arrangements for women, as it would not only improve their quality of life but also reduce the overall burden they face in their work roles. Wage Disparities also play a significant role in the challenges faced by women workers. The positive relationship between wage disparities and challenges indicates that unequal pay for women compared to their male counterparts contributes to a greater sense of discrimination, insecurity, and frustration, all of which add to the challenges they experience. So, the need for policies aimed at eliminating wage disparities and ensuring equal pay for equal work, which would help mitigate the challenges faced by women in the unorganised sector and Hazardous Working Conditions significantly contribute to the challenges faced by women. Women working in environments where safety and



health standards are compromised face significant physical, emotional, and psychological challenges. The finding emphasizes the importance of improving workplace safety and providing adequate protective measures for women workers, particularly in sectors with high exposure to hazardous conditions.

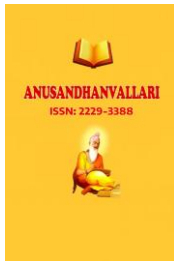
Finally, Social Barriers also positively affect the challenges experienced by women workers in the unorganised sector. Cultural norms and societal expectations often limit women's opportunities for advancement and growth, while also imposing additional burdens on their work-life balance. It suggests that addressing these social and cultural barriers can help improve the work experiences of women, fostering an environment where they can thrive professionally.

Managerial Implications and Conclusion

The findings of this study provide addressing the challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector. Job security measures should be implemented to provide women with stable employment conditions, including the introduction of formal contracts and other benefits that secure their work status. Employers should aim to bridge wage disparities by offering equal pay for equal work and ensuring women receive fair compensation for their contributions. Moreover, it is essential for organisations to invest in health and safety measures to reduce hazardous working conditions that disproportionately affect women. Providing adequate safety training, equipment, and workplace monitoring can significantly improve the work environment. Finally, combating social barriers involves both organisational efforts and broader societal changes. Organisations can implement policies that promote gender equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace, while advocating for broader societal changes that reduce gender-based discrimination and traditional roles. These managerial efforts will not only contribute to improving the conditions of women workers in the unorganised sector but will also enhance productivity, job satisfaction, and long-term sustainability. Addressing the challenges faced by women workers in the unorganised sector of Virudhunagar district requires a comprehensive and multi-dimensional approach that involves not only policy interventions but also community support, educational opportunities, and organizational changes. The findings of this study highlight the need for targeted measures that can significantly improve the working conditions and overall wellbeing of these women.

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