

NEOLIBERALISM, PRIMITIVE ACCUMULATION AND PRECARIOUS WORK: A REVIEW OF EVIDENCES FROM INDIA

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[This paper provides a review of the developments which has been occurring in the labour market in the making of neoliberal India beginning early 1980s. The macroeconomic data shows that the share of wages in the total gross value added has been constantly falling along with increase in the incidence of unemployment and informalisation of the formally employed workforce. Numerous ethnographic studies provide the evidence that there has been no abatement in precarious work in the informal sector of the economy in the post-reforms period compared to the pre-reforms period. Both, the macroeconomic and ethnographic studies, reach to the conclusion that these developments in India's labour market are not the result of the natural market forces but to a great extent due to the occurrence of primitive accumulation in the economy. The capitalist class has been using primitive accumulation as a tool to extract the surplus by embedding it in the growth process in India's economy.]

Keywords: *India, Neoliberalism, Informalisation, Primitive Accumulation, Precarious Work, Deproletarianisation]*

Introduction

The neoliberal theology asserts that unrestricted markets are the most efficient mechanism possible for allocating resources and optimising outcomes for national economies, organisations and individual workers. This ideology aims to limit regulation, remove constraints on the flow of goods and money, privatize state functions, and dismantle structures associated with collective bargaining (Friedman, 1977; Fourcade and Healey, 2007, p. 286; Cooper and Ellem, 2008). This theology asserts that a higher and

sustained economic growth should be the state goal and condemns state intervention in economic activities; and therefore argues for the replacement of public enterprises with private enterprises, and transforming the public institutions on the lines of businesslike structures and strategies. In addition, this ideology believes that a liberal regime not only 'crowds in' private investment but also creates gainful employment opportunities to ever increasing labour force especially in formal employment (Zagha, 1999).

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In addition, numerous neoliberals argued that the feudalistic or semi-feudalistic mode of production prevailing in many countries will vanish once the neoliberalism set its foot firmly in the state, because 'precarious work' including 'forced labour' is incompatible with neoliberalism, as employers would supersede unfree workers with free workers and the workers will be rewarded in proportion to their marginal productivity (see Brass, 2013 for the review).

Since 1970, the three pillars on which the neoliberalism is grounded—supremacy of the market, an open economy and minimalist state intervention representing both an ideological position and endorsing economic individualism—has almost swayed the whole erstwhile socialist economic policy leaning countries and India is no exception, though making of India as a neoliberal state began rather late compared to China and the other east-Asian countries. Nevertheless, beginning 1980, Indian policy makers unleashed a slew of reform measures, and by mid-1990 the state of India embraced almost all the features of a neoliberal state (Kohli, 2006).

But does it mean that with the radical overhauling in India's economic structure, the immiserization of the working class has come to a halt? Has primitive accumulation, closely associated with neoliberalism not started to appear? Attempting to build on past debates, this paper tries to address these issues, in the ongoing attempts at radical transformation of Indian economy

The whole article is divided into five sections. Following the introduction in Section I, Section II sheds light on the interlinkage among neoliberalism, primitive accumulation and precarious work, which forms the context of this paper. Section III provides the emergence of primitive accumulation in neoliberal India as revealed by different National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) rounds data. Section IV shows evidences of continuation (and emergence) of precarious work drawn from various ethnographic studies in neoliberal India. Finally, section V concludes the article.

Neoliberalism, Primitive Accumulation and Precarious Work

In any society the livelihood of different groups of people is crucially determined by (a) who possesses effective control over productive resources, and (b) what happens to the output created with these resources. The productive resources, such as land, variable inputs, instruments of production and machines are referred to as the means of production. Control over the means of production and what happens to the output are inextricably linked. The Marxian notion which describes the link and places it in a social context forms the social relations of production. An extension of the concept of the social relation of production is the 'mode of production'. In addition to social relations of production, it encompasses the characteristic technological development of the system called as the 'forces of production' and the various legal, institutional, and

cultural forms which forms the 'superstructure' which regulate its operation. Social labour underlies the concept of social reproduction. It is the outcome of production relations between people which enables a society to renew itself in all its various dimensions over time. It includes production of the means of production, production of subsistence, and also production of labour (Ellis, 1993).

Social reproduction may be of two kinds: (a) simple reproduction and (b) expanded reproduction. In simple reproduction, social labour produces just enough to ensure that the society keeps ticking over at the same material level year after year. It means this 'just' enough must be sufficient to enable production to continue at the recurrent level. Expanded reproduction, on the other hand, requires that society produces more than that is strictly required to maintain it in the same conditions in successive time periods. The difference between this extra production and the level needed for simple reproduction provide the '*surplus*'.

The production of a 'surplus' over and above recurrent needs is a prerequisite for society to experience rising output and standards of living. However, it does not on its own guarantee rising output and standards of living and this is where the class structure of society becomes important. A 'mode of surplus extraction refers' to the specific way in which unpaid labour is extracted from the producers and appropriated by the dominant classes (Sehgal, 2005).

The aim of the capitalist class is to expropriate surpluses through enhanced expanded reproduction. Among various means, one way through which this surplus can be extracted is through 'primitive accumulation'. For Marx, it is the 'historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production', transforming the social 'means of subsistence and of production into capital' and the 'immediate producers into wage labourers' (Marx, 1990: 714). For instance, the removal of agricultural producers and the artisanal labour from the countryside and making them a part of capitalist production relations, referred to as deproletarianisation (Banajee, 2003) process, are central to primitive accumulation.

"Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time accumulation of misery, the torment of labour, slavery, ignorance, brutalization and moral degradation at the opposite pole, i.e., on the side of the class that produces its own product as capital" (Marx, 1990). Taking a cue from Marx, the neo-Marxists believe that that the neoliberalism, in fact, is the manifestation of capitalism (see McMichael, 1977; Sanyal, 2007). They term proletarianisation process as only one aspect of the primitive accumulation. The proletarianisation will not continue until the whole labour force is deproletarianised. In certain contexts capitalists seemed to prefer and benefit from those measures that prevented full proletarianization of the labour force, since this prevented capitalists from having to pay for the full costs of the social

reproduction of labour (Wallerstein, 1979). In other contexts, capitalists can benefit from maintaining a large non-proletarianized labour force that contributes indirectly to capitalists' ability to formally exploit wage labour, a project that may confront the attempt of workers to gain greater access to paid, proletarianized labour. Capitalism is based as much on the maintenance of non-proletarian and semi-proletarian labour as on the production of proletarian labour. Discipline under capitalism is imposed on the workforce through the 'threat of the sack', which however would cease to have any effect in a full employment economy. "It is only because unemployment exists, and entails deprivation, that the 'sack' retains its punitive character" (Glassman, 2006).

Thus, in effect, the process of substituting skilled and formally employed workers with informal workers, maintaining a reserve army of labour, and curtailment in workers' rights are the tools of primitive accumulation. Modern industry's whole form of motion therefore depends on the constant transformation of a part of the working population into unemployed or semi-employed 'hands', and often these unemployed workers are pitted against the active labour force by the capitalists to depress the rate of wages of those employed workers and to increase the rate of surplus value. The capitalist replace skilled, more costly and the organised workers already established in the labour process with less skilled, cheaper and unorganised ones; which enables producers to exert a downward

pressure on the pay, conditions and living standards of the proletariat in order to augment higher profit (Standing, 2014).

Also, even where capitalist development destroyed one or another of these, in particular branches, at certain points it calls them up again elsewhere, because it needs them for the preparation of raw materials up to a certain point. Therefore, it is always not necessary for the capitalists of the North to conquer the territory of the Global South for the maintenance of capitalist accumulation. A capitalist of the North can achieve this through 'global commodity chains' which contribute to 'social imperialism' and 'hyper-exploitation' of workers in the South. Through this mechanism, the capitalists of the developed countries (the Global North) can exert positive effects for the development of capitalism in the core of the global economy and negative effects in the periphery (the Global South or the developing nations). Thus, the small peasant firm or a household unit are connected with big ones in global commodity chains, an arrangement described as typical of capitalist manufacture (Barrientos et al, 2013; Nathan and Sarkar, 2013, 2014).

In general, precarious work refers to the work of that nature which has the characteristics as deterioration in occupational health and safety standards, limited access to labour standards, lack of recognition as a worker and absence of the qualities of 'decent work' (Standing, 2011). In defiance of the neoliberalists' argument that in the capitalist mode of production all forms of traditional

structures and dependency relations would disappear and employers would supersede unfree working arrangements with free working arrangements, the neo-Marxists see little reason to suppose that capitalists would wish to dispose of all formally non-capitalist processes of production. Capitalism is fully compatible with precarious nature of work and forced labour although the nature of precarious work may subtly change in the capitalist mode of production (Banajee, 2003; Brass, 2013). The capitalists in order to accumulate and expropriate 'surplus' from the working class in a rather faster and easier way will resort to using any of the features of pre-capitalist modes of production that accumulate 'surplus' for the capitalists (Carswell and De Neve, 2013; Philips, 2013).

The section which follows depicts whether primitive accumulation has become a feature (or not) in a relatively faster growing neoliberal state of India.

Growth and Primitive Accumulation

Between 1980 and 1991; the 'Nehruvian import-substituting, socialist autarchic model of development' was replaced with a neoliberal model of development in India. The impact of neoliberal reforms process can be gauged from the fact that

the share of public investment which averaged around 12 per cent in the beginning of 1980s came down to close to 9 per cent in 2012. Over the same period the share of household sector steadily increased from 8 per cent to 13.6 per cent, while the share of the private sector, a miniscule 5.2 per cent in 1980s increased to 14.3 per cent in 2012. In addition, the inflow of foreign direct investment in India's economy increased from almost naught to over 2 per cent of GDP during the aforesaid time period. The impact of economic reforms on India's economy can also be gauged from the fact that India's trade intensity (a ratio of sum of the exports and imports to GDP) which was hovering around 13 per cent in 1980s progressively increased to 42 per cent by 2011-12 (Giri & Sinha, 2014).

On whole, the growth rate of India's economy in the post-reforms period surpassed the growth rate witnessed by the economy during the pre-reforms period. As a matter of fact, in each successive period in the post-reforms period, excepting the period 1999 to 2004-05, the growth rate of India's economy accelerated (see Table 1). India not only shed the image of the 'Hindu rate' of growth but also emerged as the fastest growing economies in the world second only to China.

Table 1: Growth in India's GDP at Factor Cost at 2004-05 Prices (in %)

Sectors	1983-84 to 1993-94	1993-94 to 1999-00	1999-00 to 2004-05	2004-05 to 2011-12	1993-94 to 2011-12
1. Agriculture & allied	2.76	3.31	1.58	3.91	3.06
2. Industry	5.48	6.94	5.62	8.00	6.98
2.1 Mining & Quarrying	6.14	5.37	4.6	3.51	4.43
2.2 Manufacturing	4.94	7.27	6.01	8.9	7.55
2.3 Electricity, gas & water supply	8.7	6.95	4.25	6.72	6.10
3. Services	6.40	8.35	7.35	9.80	8.63
3.1 Construction	4.88	6.36	9.35	8.78	8.12
3.2 Trade, hotels, transport & Communications	5.72	9.6	8.86	10.24	9.64
3.3 Financing, real estate and business services	9.07	7.72	6.78	11.71	8.99
3.4 Community, social & personal services	5.86	8.18	4.58	7.27	6.82
GDP at factor cost	4.98	6.69	5.75	8.45	7.11

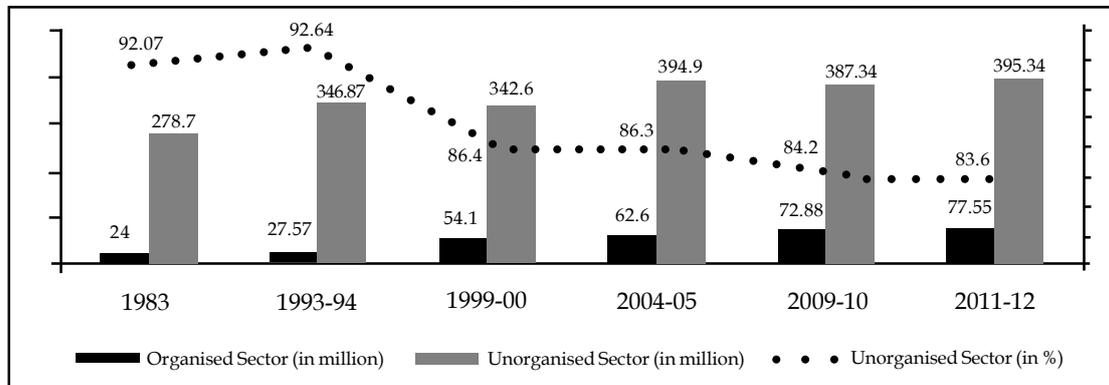
Source: Authors' calculations based on Reserve Bank of India database

But has primitive accumulation not become a feature of neoliberal growth process in India's economy? There are two sectors in India's economy which employs labours: the organised sector and the unorganised sector. By and large, it is 'only' the organised sector which assures 'decent' formal employment to the workforce guaranteeing security of employment and other social security benefits; whereas the unorganised sector provides only informal employment bereft of any social security benefits.

Figure 1 depicts the trends in the organised and the unorganised sector workforce in India. The unorganised sector workforce after witnessing an increasing trend from 1983 to 1993-94 had started declining afterwards. From close to 92.6 per cent in 1993-94 the share

of workforce in the unorganised sector declined to 83.6 per cent by 2011-12. But in absolute terms, the unorganised sector workforce has increased by 48.5 million from 1993-94 to 2011-12. However, the increase in the unorganised sector workers has occurred at a decelerating pace in the post-reforms era relative to the socialist era. During 1983 to 1993-94, the unorganised sector workforce increased at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of over 2.2 per cent per annum, whereas in the post reforms period it has increased at a CAGR of only 0.7 per cent per annum. Also, in the post reforms era there has been almost three fold increase in the share of organised sector workers. The organised sector workforce increased from a mere 27.5 million in 1993-94 to over 77.5 million by 2011-12.

Figure 1: Organised and Unorganised Sector Workers (in million) and the Share of Unorganised Sector Workers (in %)



Source: Authors' calculation based on NSSO unit level data

However before reaching to the final conclusion that the trends shown by the Indian labour market in the post neoliberal era are very much consistent with the neoliberal arguments, we have to see the ratio of the informally employed workers to the formally employed workers in the organised and the unorganised sectors, because all the workers in the organised sector may not be formally employed.

Table 2 shows that in the post-reforms era until 1999-00, close to 62 per cent of the workers in the organised sector were formally employed. That is, despite possessing same skills and working on the same shop floor along with the formally employed workers, 38 per cent of the informally employed workers were not the employees of the enterprise in which they work. Either they were casually employed or they were hired through a third party-labour contractor.

After 1999-00, there has been a steady decline in the share of formally employed

workers in the organised sector. In 1999-00, close to 33.7 million persons amounting to 62.3 per cent of India's workforce were formally employed in the organised sector which has steadily declined to 32.7 million persons amounting to a little over 42 per cent of the workforce by 2011-12 (Table 2, Col. 5 and 6). Ironically, when the economy of India grew at a rapid pace from 2004-05 to 2009-10, informal employment in the organised sector also gained pace, increasing from 46.4 per cent in 2004-05 to about 57.8 per cent in 2009-10.

Putting together both the workers in the organised and the unorganised sectors, one could notice that there has been no change in the percentage of workers employed informally in the post-reforms era relative to the pre-reforms era (Table 2, col. 4). Close to 92.66 per cent of the workers were employed informally in both the organised and the unorganised sectors in 2011-12 which is similar to the total percentage of workers employed informally during the entire socialist era.

Table 2: Workers in Formal and Informal Employment in Organised and Unorganised Sectors

Year	Sector	Informal Employment		Formal Employment		Total Employment	
		(in million)	(in %)	(in million)	(in %)	(in million)	(in %)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1999-00	Unorganised	341.30	99.62	1.40	0.41	342.60	86.34
	Organised	20.50	37.89	33.70	62.29	54.10	13.63
	Total	361.70	91.15	35.00	8.82	396.80	100.00
2004-05	Unorganised	393.50	99.65	1.40	0.35	394.90	86.32
	Organised	29.10	46.49	33.40	53.35	62.60	13.68
	Total	422.60	92.37	34.90	7.63	457.50	100.00
2011-12	Unorganised	393.36	99.50	1.98	0.50	395.34	83.61
	Organised	44.82	57.83	32.70	42.19	77.50	16.39
	Total	438.18	92.66	34.70	7.34	472.90	100.00

Source: Authors' calculation based on NSSO unit level data

The increase in the incidence of unemployment rate in India's economy since 1983 further verifies the occurrence of primitive accumulation in the economy (see Table 3). The unemployment rate of the female labour force has steadily increased from a mere 1.2 per cent in 1983 to 2.4 per cent by 2011-12, thereby raising the reserve army of female labour from 1.1 million in 1993-94 to more than 3.2 million by 2011-12. Compared to pre-reforms period 1983, in 2011-12 close to three times more female labour force are unemployed.

The male unemployment rate has also constantly inched upwards. In the year 2011-12, close to 11 million male labour forces were between jobs compared to 4.9 million in 1983. This clearly shows that the Indian economy is not only facing an enormous employment generation challenge for both the male and female workers in the post reforms period but also failed to reap the 'demographic dividend' from its world's largest and youngest labour force thanks to primitive accumulation.

Table 3: Labour force (LFPR) , Workforce (WPR) and Unemployment Rate (UR) by UPSS Status

Year	Male			Female			Persons		
	LFPR(%)	WPR(%)	UR(%)	LFPR(%)	WPR(%)	UR(%)	LFPR(%)	WPR(%)	UR(%)
1983	55.1	53.9	2.3	30	29.6	1.2	42.9	42.1	1.9
1993-94	55.6	54.5	2.1	29	28.6	1.5	42.8	42	1.9
1999-00	54.06	52.74	2.45	26.02	25.58	1.67	40.54	39.63	2.13
2004-05	55.9	54.7	2.2	29.4	28.7	2.6	43	42	2.3
2011-12	55.6	54.4	2.1	22.5	21.9	2.4	39.5	38.6	2.2
Estimated Numbers (in million)									
1983	203.4	200.6	4.9	103.1	102.8	1.1	306.5	303.4	6.1
1993-94	256.3	252.3	5.4	123.3	121.9	2.1	379.6	374.2	7.5
1999-00	279.5	274	6.9	125.4	123.9	2.1	404.9	397.9	9.1
2004-05	314.7	309.3	7.2	151.9	148.6	4.1	466.6	457.9	11.3
2011-12	351.3	343.8	7.6	132.4	129.1	3.2	483.7	472.9	10.8

Source: Authors' estimation based on various NSSO's unit level data

The alternative way to observe the primitive accumulation in India's economy is by looking at the magnitude of self-employed, regular/salaried and the casual workers. Both self-employed workers and the casual workers are informally employed. These jobs are primarily a survival mechanism rather

than productive work with decent work and progressively rising income levels. These categories of workers are mainly marginal farmers, homeworkers working through putting-out system, street vendors and other street service provider in survival-level jobs.

Table 4: Categories of Workers (in million) and (in %) in UPSS Status

Sectors	1983		1993-94		1999-00		2004-05		2009-10		2011-12	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Self-Employed	174.05	57.5	204.8	54.7	209.3	52.6	258.4	56.4	232.7	50.7	246.85	52.2
Regular/Salaried employee	40.86	13.5	49.43	13.2	58.2	14.6	69.7	15.2	75.1	16.4	84.65	17.9
Casual Labour	87.78	29	119.8	32	130.3	32.8	129.7	28.3	151.3	32.9	141.4	29.9

Source: Authors estimates from various NSSO employment and unemployment rounds

In the post-reforms era there has been a marginal decline in the category of self-employed workers in both absolute and relative terms, especially after 2004-05. But, of the 11.5 million workers who shunned self-employment from 2004-05 to 2011-12, only about 2.7 million, could join as a regular/salaried workers and the remaining had to contend with the work of casual nature having no security of work. During the period 2004-05 through 2011-12, the strength of casual labour increased by over 11.7 million in the Indian economy (see Table 4).

Thus, the expectation that such self-employed and casually employed people with limited asset base and with limited markets for their products would get into regular wage and salaried jobs has been belied in the post-reforms period. It is not only the private sector which has increased casual employment in the economy, but almost all the provincial as well as the union governments of India have also followed the footsteps of the private capitalists.

The private capitalists including the public sector enterprises have made all the labour

laws defunct by resorting to use of contract labour and casual labour to manipulate the workforce according to their requirements. In the post neoliberal reforms period, there appears to have been serious erosion in the workers' rights, trade unions have been on the defensive, labour militancy have given way to employer militancy which manifests in the significant increase in the incidence of lockouts and a decline in the incidence of strikes in the post-reforms era (Sundar, 2011; Sood et al, 2014).

All these developments in India's labour market is occurring despite so called strict labour laws and regulatory mechanism in place to curb such practices and safeguarding the interest of the workers. These developments provide the evidence that informalisation and immiserisation process in India's economy is not occurring because of the natural market forces but because of the deliberate attempt of the capitalists to reduce the labour cost, thereby increasing their surplus value. A continuous increase in the share of profit relative to wage share in total output in India's economy since

1990 (Sood et al, 2014; Nathan and Sarkar, 2014) lends credence to the occurrence of primitive accumulation in the neoliberal state of India.

Precarious Work in Neoliberal India

The other arguments of the neoliberalists are that with the opening up of the Indian economy, the poor and vulnerable workers in global economic activity can be associated with improved working conditions and improved socio-economic circumstances primarily from the rise in the real wages of the workforce based on the Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson framework. The anti-neoliberalists critics do often look at the other side of this argument and opined that the participation of poor and vulnerable workforce into such relations of production will function as a mechanism for producing and reproducing poverty and vulnerability, as they are integrated into exploitative and precarious forms of work with few possibilities for accumulation or the achievement of security which has been captured in the concept of 'adverse incorporation' which central insight is that poverty results not only from conditions of exclusion from labour markets but rather from the adverse terms on which vast numbers of workers are incorporated into them (Philips, 2013). It means that in a circular dynamic economy, chronic poverty enhances vulnerability to labour exploitation, and these forms of exploitation themselves act to produce and reproduce chronic poverty. The key point is that these adverse terms of incorporation are foundational to

processes of economic accumulation across the global economy.

In neoliberal India, household units far from vanishing out, in effect are becoming highly integrated with the economies of the rest of the world, as these have become one of the 'nodes' in the global production networks or global value chains (Gereffi et al, 2005) These households enterprises are being made 'outside' production units by many a multinational enterprise headquartered in the developed countries of the North. These forms of adverse incorporation are a new variant of the age old concept of semi-feudal mode of production prevalent (still it is) in the economy of India. Usurious capital and debt plays a key role in such relations of production. The semi-servile state of the workers did not arise because of the lower productivity of the workers but because of the low wages/earnings of the workers which necessitates loans at the onerous terms by the workers from their employers which are possibly never repaid and ultimately the workers' pay back in labour services. This mechanism of perpetual debt bondage drastically reduced the freedom of labour to participate in the institutions of wage-labour. In such a situation, large parts of the surplus product of the direct producers are appropriated as direct 'labour services' which is nothing but a Marxian mode of surplus extraction through unequal exchange. Also the relations of production between the producers and the workers in such arrangements are very much embedded within a social structure organised in

terms of class, religion, caste and gender and also space (De Neve, 2013).

On the one hand, value is produced within the GPN but the distribution of the value is largely skewed in favour of the lead firm and the middlemen. The lead firms capture most of the surplus profits or rents within the GPN, the middlemen or the contractors receive commission and other benefits by imposing various forms of coercion on the laboring class. The lead firm is discharged of any obligation towards labour, which is not 'his'. Given the ease of entry into this segment of work, the wages are driven down to the minimum, to the cost of production of labour or even lower. The geographical mobility and lack of industrial background of these workers are relevant assets for the contractors and the exporters. Production in a GPN not only ensures cost minimisation, but also minimal risks of unionisation. Many well documented studies points to the fact that in neoliberal India the multinational enterprises are reaping enormous profits and rents through unequal exchange by sub-contracting their work through a middleman to these household enterprises located in peri-urban and remote rural districts. In fact, all the major players-Walmart, Tesco, Marks and Spencer, Van Heusen, Tommy Hilfiger, Nike and Adidas-get their job done through their process (Mezzadri, 2010; Carswell and De Neve, 2013; Philips et al, 2014).

It is estimated that more than half of the workers working in the home based units are women and children working on a piece-rate basis, characterised by an

irregular and precarious pattern of employment and various forms of manipulation and exploitation by contractors or agents. Mehta and Sherry (2009) found that there is rampant exploitation of child labour in the *Zardosi* industry economically and physically. The migrant adult and the child workers are given the wage rate far lower than the natives. Rustagi (2009) in a survey of 1981 households across the four states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chattisgarh and Rajasthan found that of the total children in the households units, 33 per cent undertook more than 21 hours of work in a week which is in clear violation of ILO's convention which has set the global standards of child labour as two hours per day. Bhaskaran et al (2010) household survey in the national capital region of Delhi in the garment segments indicated that, of the 201 'home-base' households sampled, 68.82 per cent reported some form of child labour. Wendy and Olsen (2012) reports employment of child labour in contract farming region in Andhra Pradesh. Mezzadri (2010) noticed that the migrant workers brought from the relatively poorer eastern states of India, eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Jharkhand, comprising both adult and children less than 14 years of age worked in a semi-servile state in the garment producing household units in GPNs in National Capital Region of Delhi.

Like the northern part of India, in south of India similar conditions prevails. The workers in the GPNs are recruited through labour contractors and majority of them work in some form of debt

bondage. In the Tirupatigarment cluster and Coimbatore power looms, mechanism of sub-contracting, practice of consumption advances (a form of debt bondage) are being used by the contractors and the lead firms to restrict the workers mobility in GPNs (Carswell and De Neve, 2013; 2014).

In the plantation industry also, a colonial vestige, no change in labour relations has occurred in the post-reforms India. Casual and contractual workers are fast replacing permanent workers, economic exploitation of the workers continues unabated. The plantation workers working lives have become more precarious in the neoliberal era compared to the pre-reforms era, because of large scale retrenchment of the plantation workers (Mishra et al, 2011; Ghosh, 2014).

Most of the aforementioned studies found that the mechanisms of social categorisation which mark out particular groups as available for incorporation into productive activity on adverse terms—that is, on terms which perpetuate, rather than alleviate, their chronic poverty and vulnerability is central to neoliberal capitalism, as most of the workers are from lower castes. This shows that the modalities of surplus extraction in neoliberal India have been socially and culturally embedded.

On the one hand, the aforesaid studies shows that the labour relations in global commodity chain seems to be analogous to the attached labour system prevalent in the agriculture sector in India through which various 'tied' labour arrangements

are in order to maintain labour discipline and lower costs, while on the other many a study says that the system of maintaining unfree labourer has almost vanished due to the commercialisation of agriculture and growth in non-farm employment opportunities in the post-reforms era in rural areas (see Berman, 2001; Srivastava, 1999; Jha, 2004; Jodhka, 2012; Basak, 2011), though Harris-White, Mishra and Upadhyay (2009) and Brass (2013) maintain that this process has to be understood in terms of relational and not systemic change. In the course of restructuring the labour process, capitalist agriculturists have not only replaced permanent labour with temporary workers but also shifted the element of unfreedom, from long-term employment to casual/migrant job. Such agrarian transformation is a form of capitalist restructuring that corresponds to deproletarianisation.

It is not only the household units or the informal enterprises where precarious work prevails and where there are decent work deficits but also in all the other formal enterprises where there are informally employed workers similar work deficits prevail. One of the manifestations of neoliberal India is the special economic zones (SEZs). The government of India provides it special status to boost exports and promote employment to the private entities. But Cross (2010) found that labour regimes in SEZs are rather exceptional and instead merely legalise exploitative informal relations. The working conditions of the informally employed

workers and the labour relations in SEZs are as precarious as any other informal enterprise in India. In automobile production GPNS too, the work conditions and labour relations are akin to the other informal enterprises. Work conditions and labour relations are as precarious as any other informal enterprises. Only a handful of workers enjoy security of work and decent work precarious (Annabhujula and Pratap, 2012a, 2012b).

Concluding Discussion

The major objective of this paper is to review the development which has been occurring in India's labour market in the neoliberal state of India. The review shows that the ideas espoused by the neoliberalist are barely valid. Both macroeconomic scenario and micro-ethnographic studies cited above provides the evidence that despite faster economic growth in post reforms period compared to the pre-reforms period, there has been barely any improvement in the working lives of workers in Indian labour market.

In today's neoliberal scenario, employing informal and contractual workers have become more profitable compared to formal and regular workers. Though this process varies from the Marx's concept of primitive accumulation but fully adheres to the neo-Marxists approach of primitive accumulation. The capitalists in order to increase their surpluses are in the process of restructuring the whole

production structure. There has been barely any increase in formally employed workforce in the economy, unemployment in the economy is continuously on the rise. This provides clear evidence that the formally employed workers are pitted against the informally and unemployed workers to bid down their wages and rights. The rise in the level of profit and steady decline in the wages' share in the total output ever since the initiation of reform process in the economy further corroborates the evidence of primitive accumulation in the economy.

Almost all the global as well as domestic business enterprises are in 'a race to the bottom' as global production is restructured to create and harness a cheap, disposable, exploitable labour force. The capitalists of the Global North by delegating the actual production of the goods are not only reaping hyper profits but are also encouraging informality and precarious work in the economy. Debt is often used with the capital to separate the worker from the ownership of his labour power thereby preventing its subject from personally commodifying it and thus to acquire control over the labour power of a worker by a capitalist producer. With this process, the capitalists have resorted to process of introduction, reintroduction or the reproduction of labour that is unfree, or what Banajee (2003) and Brass (2013) aptly termed 'deproletarianisation'.

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