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The Home Work That Can Never Get Done: Locating Home Based Work in the Global Capital Circuit

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The paper attempts to locate home based work within the larger spectrum of capitalist accumulation. The capitalist mode of production necessitates stringent and perpetual control over the female population. In that context, by focusing on female home based workers, the paper reasons how historically the four walls of the house have fenced women within them. Further there are manifold ways in which this home work exploits the labour. These include the poor remuneration and unbearable work hours. In addition, the multiple layers of alienation experienced by the workers are also touched upon. The intent remains to draw attention to the deplorable conditions of home based work and how it forms a key nodal point in capitalism of the present day.

Keywords: home based work, women, exploitation, capitalist accumulation, patriarchy

"Some birds are not meant to be caged, that's all. Their feathers are too bright, their songs too sweet and wild. So you let them go, or when you open the cage to feed them they somehow fly out past you. And the part of you that knows it was wrong to imprison them in the first place rejoices, but still, the place where you live is that much more drab and empty for their departure."- Stephen King

The surging number of those claiming to be 'self- employed' and 'working from home' could be one of the factors demanding a peek into the economy, ghastly informal and at spiking rates of unemployment. The paper tries to look at the group of home based workers, a node in the global capital circuit. The large presence of women among home workers made it of paramount importance to understand the layers of confinement they have gone through historically. The project is to trace how at most points in history, the four walls of the house proved to be only fencing women within them. Further, an attempt is to locate home work within the spectrum of capitalist accumulation and how the state does what it always did, intervening at convenient points to ensure that nothing obstructs this venture of the capital. The several ways in which the home work exploits the labour, in terms of poor remuneration and work hours are also looked at. The effort is to call out the deplorable conditions of home work and how it forms a key nodal point in capitalism of the present day.

The paper shall initially conceptualise home based workers. The intention shall be to bring out the inherent informality and the associated precariousness which comes with the work that they do. Capitalism as a mode of production remains intrinsically dependent on women who are the producers of labour power. For that reason majorly, concerted efforts continue to be made to confine women- be it within their own houses or elsewhere. This process of confining women as home

based workers is traced to the larger capitalist accumulation process in the contemporary world. The exploitation at the workplace (homes) and the manifold discriminatory practices meted out to the workers remain a part and parcel of this production process. Further, the paper shall elucidate how home based work forms a crucial node in the global capital circuit. The capitalist expansion remains unhindered with limitations of home based workers to organise and voice their concerns in this exploitative framework.

Problematising the Concept of 'Home Based' Workers

The category of home workers can be conceptualised as a set of people working 'in or around the home for a cash income'[1]. In the developing countries, the scope of home- based workers extends beyond the private separate domestic space and also acknowledges that they work around or outside homes pursuing different activities (Pearson, 2004). The presence of home based work is becoming widely rampant and it is pertinent to look at the exploitative conditions at play in the workplace (own houses in this case) along with the larger capital which perpetuates this phenomenon. The conception of home based work can be seen as a new form of subcontracted production[2]. An estimated three hundred million home workers are part of the workforce globally (Delaney, 2004). It remains quite obvious that they form part of the burgeoning informal economy. The share of women in this category is also rising. Home workers produce largely for 'big brands'. Numerous examples of this include home workers in Northern Greece producing for Siemens or those in Netherlands producing for Philips[3]. Global capital promoting this subcontracting relies heavily on sweatshop work conditions[4].

One ought to adequately acknowledge the unfortunate labour conditions in a sweatshop at this juncture. The vehement defenders of sweatshop labour ineptly see it as the "first rung on a ladder to greater economic development" (Snyder, 2010). Arguing that it provides the "best available employment alternative" for many workers is an indicator of the lack of the much needed debate on perspectives of moral and political philosophers over sweatshops in the global economy[5]. Snyder (2010) points out the unfairness in this exploitative setting as a moral wrong in addition to exploitation as a mere 'use' of others. Most often it is found that the extreme competitive pressure faced by the industries, such as garments, pass this on to home- based women workers by reducing the effective rates for piece- rate work (Ghosh, 2009). Of the 15 million women workers in the unorganised sector in India, more than half of them were predominantly involved in home- based work

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[1]As cited in Pearson (2004), this simplistic definition is drawn from the discussion paper by Jane Tate (2002).

[2]The need for subcontracting is widely attributed to mechanisms for cutting down costs of production under capitalist mode of production.

[3]As cited in Delaney (2004) based on the Report on Homework in European Subcontracting Chains

[4]The workers are denied access to safe working conditions, have deplorable living standards and substandard wages in sweatshop conditions.

[5]As cited in Snyder (2004), Denis Arnold points this lacunae in his review of "Exploitation" by Alan Wertheimer and "The Sweatshop Quandry: Corporate Responsibility on the Global Frontier" by Pamela Varley in Business Ethics Quarterly, Vol. 13, No. 2, Employment (Apr., 2003), pp. 243-256.

catering to different types of industries on a piece- rate basis. They include zari, charkha, sticking bindis, stitching labels, etc. The beedi industry in India, for instance, has approximately 90 per cent of women and children under exploitative working conditions at home[6].

There arises a need to look at exploitation of the workers in their being subjected to deplorable working conditions along with the continuous repression of their wages. Literature on home based workers brings out the vulnerability of this group of people due to the economy becoming more informal in its terms of employment. The unhindered efforts of capitalism to ensure the maintenance of a reserve industrial army[7] are quite stark in this phenomenon of subcontracted home based workers as well. The insecurity of these workers in this chain is taken advantage of at many levels by the contractors. The literature on home based workers tends to make this classification. There are two categories of home workers. Dependent workers are paid piece rates and they usually produce for a subcontractor. They could also be producing for an intermediary company in a contract chain. The second category is independent or 'own- account' worker. They produce for direct sale through shops, street stalls, or local villages. They get to determine what products they make and where they sell them (Delaney, 2004). This categorisation is probably intended to capture the extent to which they form a part of the global value chain. The difference (if any) does not render them free from toiling in the informal economy. Pearson (2004) also contests this categorisation. It is mostly drawing on the shared features of these two groups of 'subcontracted workers' and 'own- account workers'. Both of them have relatively meagre earnings from work. This coerces them into income patching[8]. Home based work then becomes one of the many activities they undertake to generate income. For instance, there are several women who retain a diverse portfolio such as working in a factory as well as working at their homes later. Also, it is often found that several of the home based workers were erstwhile employees in factories. Mostly in garment industry in the case of Brazil and Mexico[9].

A fallout of multiple occupations is that there shall be underreporting of women's employment in the informal economy (as cited in Pearson, 2004). What women's work contributes to household income have always outstripped that which is accounted for (if at all that is done). This is an indicator of how multiple earning strategies are requisite to survival, which is especially harder in economies characterised largely by informal employment. Both the subcontracted home worker as well as the own- account worker are affected by this invisibilisation process. This compartmentalisation, therefore, seems to hardly matter at the end of the day, as little difference exists in the extent to which their valuable contribution is (not) acknowledged. Another common characteristic is that both groups contribute to an industry mostly involved in exports. This also involves labour intensive finishing work[10]. In India, subcontracted workers often engage in processing and assembling

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[6]The data from Labour Bureau, 1995, as cited in Ghosh (2009).

[7]Marx, K. (1867). Capital (vol. 1). Chapter 25.

[8]Most of these home based workers are forced to engage in multiple jobs to sustain. This is called income patching

[9]This is similar in Bombay as well. A study by Women Working Worldwide quoted in Pearson (2004) found that some of the homeworkers used to work in factories with twenty or more workers or in sweatshops.

[10]Making trainer laces, assembling chains, sewing in labels are all examples of tiring, labour intensive activities that are mostly for the export industry.

activities as well[11]. Own account workers by definition tend to mean 'self- employed'. Pearson (2004) describes how they are accountable for collecting their own raw materials, designing and manufacturing products, along with finding and selling them in particular markets. Essentially this means the manager, administrator and marketing agent, all rolled into one person. However, not all of them have direct access or independent status in the market. This means that most of their own account workers tend to supply a range of their products to 'middle- men'. For example, Bulgarian knitters supply their produce to traders who export those to Greece over the border[12]. These workers then form another set of workers who are 'dependent' to deal with the pressure of inflowing cheap imports, with equally limited control over the flow of their work. This differentiation is rendered without any benefit as they both lack the opportunity or capacity to accumulate. Most of them fall into the survival category with low paid home based work yielding minimum cash for daily reproduction (2004).

The above categorisation in the literature brings an interesting question to the forefront. Self- employment as a category has been attaining greater attention in academia. Though not only associated with homework, one can problematise the very category of 'self- employment' in the light of home based workers as well. To what extent are the workers who categorise themselves as self- employed in charge of all the necessary work which shall ensure the survival and security of their families? Do they possess the much needed capital or machinery to evolve into a business that can be profitable? To what extent is it possible to design their own products that will assure them a market which will then provide them (hopefully) with enough cash income for their households?

The number of people describing themselves as being "self-employed" is increasing in the non- agricultural sector as well. Around half the workforce in India or 280 million people were self-employed (Ghosh, 2009)[13]. This is largely seen among rural women, accounting for two-thirds of all jobs. In rural India, over forty per cent of workers are dependent on self- employment in non- agricultural activities. However, for at least some workers who are self- employed, their work does not contribute as the dominant income generating form of the household. These are quite often the women of the household. Ghosh (2009) studied the expectations of the self- employed from their work, pertaining to their income and the work itself. The shocking results show how a significant proportion of them seems satisfied with monthly incomes that fall well below the minimum wages in the country. To top this is the gender gap in this indicator. Women workers on average were willing to work for incomes much lower than their male counterparts, even at rates which are half of what the males get[14]. The depressing reality of self- employment is made starker in

[11]Manufacture of agarbattis (incense sticks), beedis (hand- rolled cigarettes) are quite common to home workers in India.

[12]As cited in Pearson (2004).

[13]Jayati Ghosh arrives at this estimate combining the estimates from 2004- 05 National Sample Survey Organisation's Survey with projections of populations by Census of India.

[14] As the legal minimum wage across the states varied, assuming 24 days of work a month, the legal minimum wages for the country was computed in the range between Rs. 1080 and Rs. 2880 per month. However, in 2004- 05, rural India had more than 10 per cent of male self- employed and over 25 per cent of female self- employed workers suggesting to be satisfied with incomes as low as Rs. 1000. Rs. 1500 would have satisfied over 50 per cent of the female self- employed workers!

their responses to whether they found their activities sufficiently remunerative. Urban women workers had the lowest expectations of all. This could be attributable to equally pathetic incomes from wage labour that even these low incomes appear as remunerative.

There exists the classic argument that self- employment provides them the freedom to determine one's own working hours and days of work, maybe even requiring them to work less hard or for fewer days. While on the surface, it sounds appealing, it demands to be probed further. On the ground, anything but this turns out to be true probably. Ghosh (2009) elucidates how a large proportion of this self-employed people worked on all seven days and that too for much longer hours[15]. The initial argument hence can be conveniently pulled down as neither are they getting to take a day off nor are they working less every day. Most of these workers engage in continuous, intensive and low- productivity work, providing little remuneration and subjecting them to enormous uncertainty due to the unpredictability of income. Essentially, they only appear to be engaged in something they have control on. Hence,

> "...the rosy image of new productive opportunities emerging from self-employment because of a vibrant fast- growing economy is unfortunately far from the truth for most such workers, even in urban areas...highly skilled professional categories and knowledge- based activities, new forms of highly remunerative self- employment are emerging. But this is only a minuscule drop in the ocean. (Ghosh, 2009)"

This juncture brings out the possibility to look at how home based work is fast becoming a way of life for many a woman. Mazumdar (2007) points out that there remains a visible increase in the numbers of women and children involved in piece-rated wage work in the home based sector[16]. One can look at this as a new way of confining women within the four walls of a house. This is compounded by the already invisible work done by women in the households. A point of interest can be in looking at how this emerges as an upshot of capitalist development, especially with the unleash of neo-liberal policies which made it inevitable for almost all members of a household to contribute to its survival.

Tracing the "Confining" of Home Based Workers

It cannot be emphasised enough that the role of women in capitalist mode of production has been underrated. The most important commodity under capitalism is labour power. Being the producers and reproducers of labour power, women play the central role in the accumulation process engrained in capitalism. The pre-capitalist society needed the work of each member of the serf. It was directed to the purpose of survival or for the prosperity of the feudal lord[17] (again indirectly for

[15]Over 90 per cent of the male self- employed and 60 per cent of the female self- employed workers worked all seven days in 2004- 05.

[16]The rampant appearance of vast and sprawling manufactories is becoming the striking feature of Indian cities, especially the capital city of Delhi.

[17]Mariarosa Dalla Costa in her pamphlet on Women and the Subversion of the community describes how this unfreedom under pre- capitalism was similar for men, women and children. They were forced to be co- operative in a unity of unfreedom.

survival). Capitalism had to break this similar kind of unfreedom of men and women. It was required to free the unfree patriarch. The purpose of this estrangement was to ensure the separation of male from the female proletarian and both of them from their children. A result of this was the transformation of the males into 'free wage earner and a new form of discriminatory confinement of the females. The moment capital has recruited man, turning him into a wage labourer, a fracture was created between him and the other proletarians (read women) who were rendered wage-less. Women then came to be seen as "incapable of being the subjects of social revolt" due to their lack of direct participation in social production.

Marx has highlighted the importance of the wage as capital rules and develops through this. It is this wage that has organised the exploitation of the non-wage labourer. All the more effective it became, as the lack of wage obscured it [18]. After all, the labour of women appeared to be some sort of personal service outside the realm of capital. When Dalla Costa writes,

> "Never had such a stunting of the physical integrity of woman taken place, affecting everything from the brain to the uterus. Participating with others in the production of a train, a car or an aeroplane is not the same thing as using in isolation the same broom in the same few square feet of kitchen for centuries",

it brings to the fore, the centuries of struggle which remained invisible for that long. They being robbed off their creative capacity and sexual capacity was necessary for capitalism to transform their sexual lives merely into a function for reproducing the labour for capital.

The concept of primitive accumulation is used by Marx to characterise the historical process which forms the basis of capitalist development by 'divorcing the producer from the means of production'[19]. This is taken up by Federici (2004)[20] to enunciate changes in the social and economic relations which came about with the advent of capitalism. Primitive accumulation holds key to revealing the structural conditions requisite for capitalist societies to exist. This starting point of development gives rise to the wage labour and the capitalist thereby becomes the 'servitude of the labourer'[21]. Federici, however, aims to look at primitive accumulation from the vantage point of the changes it brought about in the social position of women and also in the production of labour power. The historical phenomena which have succeeded in developing a new sexual division of labour by subjugating women's labour and women's reproductive function to reproduce the workforce are succinctly pointed out by her (2004). This is also compounded by the creation of a new patriarchal order drawing from the exclusion of women from waged- work, consequently a subordination to men. She also brings to notice the mechanisation of the proletarian body and its transformation. In the case of women, they become mere machines for the production of new workers. Several historical circumstances showcase how capitalism as a system subordinates life to the

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[18]Dalla Costa points out that the wage commanded a larger amount of labour than what was appearing in the factory bargaining.
[19]Marx, Capital. Volume 1. Chapter 26.
[20]Caliban and the Witch, 2004.
[21] Marx, Capital, Volume 1.

production of profits, requiring that the further accumulation of labour power deems the maximum of violence[22].

The 19th century created the 'full- time housewife'[23]. As they now become 'free' from any other commodity production in the society, there emerges a separation of commodity production from reproduction of labour power, which concomitantly created a capitalist use of wages and used markets as a means for accumulating unpaid labour. This separation of production from reproduction rendered a class of women who were as dispossessed as men[24], but the lack of wages forced them into chronic poverty, made them perpetually dependent on men and invisibilised them as workers. This unique process of social degradation was foundational for capitalism to thrive and accumulate (Federici, 2004). It has remained so since and one can view the new forms of confinement created by capitalism as offshoots of this. It was seen as a necessity to socially confine women to the households for capitalism to prosper. Within this logic alone lies the economic necessity for the same[25]. As Mazumdar (2007) points out, "Economic confinement through home based work was emerging as a material buttress for the social confinement of women". One can argue that it probably has always been the case, considering the key factors to any form of confinement. In other words, this social enclosure of a person most often roots for the economic betterment of the oppressor. Manufacturing consent for such confinement can be then through empty words which tend to serve the purpose, quite often.

The approach to home based work officially has been as an avenue for workers to generate income. The unpublished Draft National Policy on Home Based Work looks at it as 'work within the discipline of the market without imposing the extra responsibility of formal employment'[26]. Another aspect is the emphasis on own-account workers, to the extent of promoting home based work. Any iota of interest shown in organising the home based workers is limited to ensuring supply of credit and raw materials and marketing their products. Guaranteeing fair wages cannot be a priority, clearly, with this perspective (Mazumdar, 2007). If the policy framework in itself reeks of the uncriticised acceptance of patriarchal norms, perpetuation of inequality within the family goes in tandem. The viewpoint that home work is sometimes 'advantageous' to women as they 'get to do their job while doing their routine work at home' demands to be problematised. If this does not capture one's attention pertaining to the patronising position of the system that puts this enormous pressure on women, not many instances will render one's disdain at this plight.

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[22]Federici gives examples of how promotion of population growth goes in tandem with massive destruction of life, such as in the case of slave trade history.

[23]Through that it was possible to define women's position in relation to men. Sexual division of work ensured their sustained dependence on men, implying that the State and the employer could use the wages of the males to command labour of the women as well.

[24]The coming up of capitalism was tremendously grounded on the creation of private property, ensuring the sustained presence and criminalisation of vagabonds, vagrants, and beggars who become the working class, and control of women's sexuality.

[25] The project of social confinement is not to be seen merely along the rhetoric of 'morals and values'. The connivance lies in making the woman succumb to the benevolence of patriarchy, so that the non- waged labour can be continually extracted.

[26] Mazumdar (2007) views this approach by the government as 'laudatory' of the disciplining that the market does.

Creating this aura of 'flexibility'[27] for the women worker to 'choose when to work', there remains an obvious belittling of their economic contribution as mere 'supplementary'[28].

Discrimination, Repressed Remuneration and Alienation

Several studies have been undertaken to understand the conditions of home workers, especially regarding their wages and work conditions. As it remains obvious that women are being largely confined to their households, different narratives need to be delivered to subtly elicit their consent for the same, for being home does not seem to provide any economic incentive for the women. The deplorably lowering wages form an indicator of the worsening situation for all in the labour force. That the real wages have not increased in decades across sectors[29] also point to the apparent plausibility of reduced wages in home based work as well.

A detailed narrative of the work conditions prevailing in 2008 in the country is provided by Ghosh (2009). After putting in over 10 hours of work, women doing 'fancy embroidery' on cloth cut pieces in Dakshinpuri, Delhi received a meagre Rs. 20- 25 per day. Rakhis were made by women at the piece- rate of 25 paise for 140 pieces in Old Delhi, giving them a wage of Rs. 5 at the maximum. Other more complex work such as making elements for ironing presses by hand also fetched Rs. 5 for 100 pieces. It was humanly implausible to make beyond 150 pieces per day. To top this is the lack of regular payments even for these lean sums as it was seen that workers were sometimes paid only after several months[30]. The case study of home workers in Delhi by Mazumdar (2007) also narrates a similar story. The average monthly income of the household was found to be roughly one- fifth of the legal minimum wage in her survey of 150 home based women workers. Access to regular work [31] was available only for around 37 per cent of the sample. Wherever work was available it was a sphere of exploitative and excessive hours of strenuous labour, which they entered in due to dire economic necessity. Most often they are also required to provide for themselves, the tools for their work. This transfer of their own houses into workplaces now literally ensures that "there is always work for a woman".

The other more apparent result of putting in long hours of labour is on their health. Headaches, body aches, strain on the eyes are the common aftermaths. This is accompanied by the other bruises and cuts which happen at work. Due to the limited lighting in the dingy quarters of their houses, they are forced to concentrate harder to work on minute parts, for instance, on embroidery work or imitation jewellery. Sometimes these workers also end up with permanent bodily damages

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[27]The Discussion Paper on Home Based Workers by the Ministry of Labour, as cited by Mazumdar, looks at home based work as being flexible for the women as they do not have to move out of their houses. The vantage point of 'convenience' being used fails miserably in looking at 'whose' convenience is being promoted in this confinement of women within the four walls of their houses.

[28] There is an explicit denigration of the economic contribution of the women home worker by stating in the Discussion Paper that their earnings are only supplementing the male earners'.

[29] Jha, P., (2016). Labour in Contemporary India. Oxford University Press.

[30] Often employers delay payments for several months and end up paying them only twice a year for festivals of Diwali and Holi.

[31]Regular work is about twenty days a month, round the year.

due to years of confinement in such hazardous conditions. In the cases of workers in the manufacturing of agarbatti or packing of naphthalene balls, being used to the fumes and smell is a part and parcel of the job for the entire household (Mazumdar, 2007). The exploitation of the worker by extracting longer work hours at cheaper rates is of paramount importance for capitalist expansion. The very essence of the piece- rate system is to sustain this suppression of wages for the worker. That the workers are rendered helpless in this process is only a natural fallout. In the case of home workers, it can be observed that most of these women do not have any control on the product produced[32]. From the cases where there is little familiarity between the home worker and the contractor, what often mattered was the willingness of the worker to produce what the contractor asked them to[33].

It remains quite evident that these workers are alienated[34] from their products at many levels. The obvious one is probably how they are physically alienated from other home workers due to all of them being confined within their respective households. The other can be of how under the strenuous labour conditions, they hardly get to connect to their creation, furthering their alienation from their produce. The third alienation in this case could be attributed to how home workers only form a nodal point in the entire gamut of global value chains. How much ever pertinent their contribution remains to be, the worker is to stay aloof from the other nodes in the circuit.

Home Based Work and the Global Circuit of Capital

One needs to look at this exploitation of home workers in the light of global capitalist expansion. The new phase of capitalism with globalised capital harps on contractual labour. In developing countries, especially, there exists a rise in the number of individuals who engage in informal processes of hiring, supervising and organising labour (Mezzadri, 2016). This is quite thinkable of an economy such as India, with over 93 per cent of the economy being informally employed[35]. An advantage for the global production circuits or global value chains in having several intermediaries or contractors is pertaining to labour regulations. The widespread presence of these mediators (conveniently) obstructs the implementation of global labour regulations.

Out-contracting is a process mostly involving multiple agents. Home workers tend to work for out-contractors. The labour outcomes are mediated by a "continuum of informal relations", more so in developing countries. One can also find that the precarious forms of work in complex production networks need these labour contractors at their helm. It is quite important to ensure that their subordinates are ‘interlocked’ in the contract. For instance, advanced payments for the worker is a classic tactic to keep them in the loop. This can also result in a neo- bondage[36] that

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[32]This commodity fetishism is characteristic of capitalist production which describes the material relations of persons and the social relations of things.

[33]There existed a commercial relationship between the home based worker and the contractor in many of the cases studied by Mazumdar (2007).

[34]As conceptualised by Marx in Capital, Volume 1.

[35] National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS), 2007.

[36]Jan Breman uses this term to spell out the near bonded- like conditions in brick- kilns. Marred by caste hierarchy, patronising the so- called upper caste land owners proved to be inevitable for the survival of these workers.

Breman (2010) elucidates. The point of import remains that contractors deploy measures to reproduce their roles as intermediaries and as dominant parties in this process (Mezzadri, 2016). Contracting networks interlock the workers across the fronts of credit, labour market and across the realm of reproduction. They tend to approach subordinates who are closer kin[37] or in their immediate neighbourhood. This is to ensure that they have a tightened control over them. Their contributions through exploiting the home workers and others employed are central to organisation of production and extraction of the surplus (Mezzadri, 2016). In other words, through these home workers, the global value chains tend to further the private accumulation of wealth. One can observe an overwhelming share of developing countries contributing as vital nodes in these circuits.

The global value chains have enforced the international division of labour to a great extent post liberalisation and globalisation. Countries such as India are at the receiving end of unfair treatment in these transactions. Mezzadri (2008) points out how the traditional structures and social institutions in India are utilised for the production and reproduction of economic labour for transnational production. There is tight management of these institutions and differences in the structures, which in their very nature are agents for accumulation, catering to a few. One may recall how globalisation as a phenomenon was also about constructing labour as a commodity rendering comparative advantage[38]. This is made easier through the increasing informalisation of the economy under neo- liberal policies. The blurring of lines between formal and informal is quite visible in the case of home work as well. While sub- contracting practices connect the formal and the informal production processes, the formalisation of labour relations is not required to be intrinsic to the formality of production process. Most often, the formal realm of production process involves informal, temporary (mostly migrant) workers. The attempts to connect the 'local' labourer in India to the 'neo- liberal capitalist architecture' succeed in doing so through the global commodity chains (Mezzadri, 2008)[39]. The social structures of accumulation, such as class, caste, gender, contribute to this accumulation process and also get transformed during the same into transnational modes of exploitation[40].

Conclusion

The approach of the State in promoting these home based workers is quite self-contradictory when they are, at the same time, dragged into the vagaries of the market. It is not surprising that the State shall not come to the rescue of these home workers when the larger private capital accumulation shall be stalled, without the

[37]This is not always the case as shown in Mazumdar (2007) where contractors could also be only partially familiar with the worker at the beginning of their contract.

[38]Mezzadri draws from how there is continuous fragmentation of the labour force under globalisation. This renders labour as the dispensable commodity for several countries in the Global South.

[39]Mezzadri studied the garment industry in Delhi to point out the unravelling of processes intending to continually keep up the labour supply. The 'comparative advantage' construct bolsters the smooth incorporation of cheap labour into the global value chains.

[40]Mezzadri invokes the approach used by Harriss- White who uses the social structures of accumulation (SSA) framework. This approach helps her to draw out how these institutions are also given new meanings and roles under globalised value chains.

active intervention of the State at all points of time. All this facade of promoting the welfare of home workers becomes quite visible if one sees the motivation behind it. "Promotion of home based workers can only be viewed as a policy of perpetuation of large numbers of home workers at a marginal level of existence" (Mazumdar, 2007). Locating home work in the global circuit of capital shall help one conceive this as yet another way of capital ensuring its expansion. Fragmentation of the labour being near successfully achieved through neo- liberal policies also make organising the home workers a demanding task. But before venturing into that, it remains pertinent to bring about an awareness of the extent to which they are being exploited within their own houses. The workers themselves are yet to be greatly appalled by the belittling of their contribution to the accumulation of private wealth.

Creating this illusion of satisfaction (or hopelessness) for the workers by compensating titbits is arguably a marvel of this illegitimate system that capitalism is. Its need to be ever expanding for its own survival demands concerted efforts to stall it. Harvey probably puts it well when he says, “Capitalism will never fall on its own. It will have to be pushed. The accumulation of capital will never cease. It will have to be stopped. The capitalist class will never willingly surrender its power. It will have to be dispossessed”.

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