

State without honour: women workers in India's Anganwadis

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Deskripsi Lengkap: <https://lib.ui.ac.id/detail?id=20470389&lokasi=lokal>

Abstrak

This book is an attempt towards a fresh understanding of the political economy of womens work in India and its relationship with the Indian state. The study critically analyses the concept and politics of work, worker, and women workers. The politics of the social, social welfare, and social policy is defined very close to how the public and the private are defined. There is an extension of the domestic into the public in the context of women workers in the social welfare schemes like the honorary workers. The study analyses the history and politics of work and womens work in the Indian context through a case study of honorary workers in the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme. The book examines how women figure in the states social welfare policies, making a link between the politics around womens work and social welfare policies. It contributes towards a better understanding of the broader political framework constructed by the political economy of the state within which womens work gets defined as honorary. The study examines the complexities around the weakening of social sector services with the withdrawal of state support under globalization coinciding with the need and demand for expansion of the horizon of state welfare schemes and programmes like the ICDS and its anganwadis. With more and more women especially from poor or lower-middle-class background employed in new social welfare schemes where the form of work is defined as voluntary social service, the book brings into attention the issue of further marginalization and exploitation of women workers especially from the lower or middle class by the Indian state.