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Empowerment of Women through Industrial Employment in a Backward Area of North India

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ABSTRACT The government of India encouraged setting up of Industrial units in backward areas granting subsidies and tax holiday. One such area is in the foothills of Shivalik hills in northern state of Punjab. Female workers of one yarn-producing unit were studied. This area is marked by largescale emigration out to other states of India and to Western Europe, North America and Down Under. Contrary to the popular feeling, 95 per cent of women workers wanted to pursue their career, though keen to pick up jobs with better emoluments. Worker management relationship was found to be harmonious. Workers felt satisfied with respect to facilities like toilets, canteens, rest rooms etc. but wanted more in-house hostel facilities, better outlets for fuel for cooking and health care inputs. Coming from extreme patriarchal ethnic backgrounds, women felt empowered and were confident to pass on this new light to the next generation and marketing. Study points towards a need to technically arm women in post harvest know-how so as to help in reducing losses during storage. This shall not only reduce economic losses but help in maintaining family food security.