

The almost fairy-tale workforce at Garmenting unit

All workers leave their footwear at the door as the factory is like our home. There was music on every floor and the worker seemed to be almost in a trance between the music and the sound of machines stitching garments.

Rubia who works as a sewing operator moved to Tirupur when she got married and has been working ever since. How does she manage all the work at home and factory. She says at home I have to do almost everything but at work, I have specific job and I get paid for it. My question if her husband helps her at home drew a big laughter from surrounding operators. The reason for this was that her husband Ramraj worked in the same floor. It seems like a family affair with close to 35% of the workforce related to one other in some way.

Life has only improved with technology as the machines they handle have moved from fully manual to semi-automatic to automatic. The skill level is still required as fabrics being handled are very delicate.

While the workers are happy that the compliance audits make the factories safer, the rules are cumbersome and make life little difficult. Sanjay, the cutting master said that I can do atleast 20-30% more if I am not to wear the metal glove. But then I will be thrown out of this factory.

Childrens education seemed to be the golden ticket to a better life. Everyone in the factory was stressing on the need to earn more to ensure best prospects for their children.