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Decent Work in the Era of Neoliberalism

An Evaluative Study of Small Enterprises' Workers in Fayoum City

By

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Summary

The current study aims to detect decent work indicators among small enterprises' workers in Fayoum in the era of neoliberalism. The study evaluates the availability of indicators of the four dimensions of decent work: employment, rights at work, social protection, social dialogue; in order to evaluate the differences between standards (decent work indicators) and the actual performance in small enterprises. The study also sought to provide a model for evaluation of decent work in small enterprises, determines the dimensions and indicators that can be used in the measurement, as well as mechanisms that could contribute in addressing aspects of the decent work deficits among workers in this sector.

The study relied on social sample survey methodology, and a questionnaire was used to collect data from (200) small enterprises' workers in Fayoum.

The study revealed the existence of varying degrees of deficit in most of the dimensions of decent work in this sector. This deficit appears in the instability at work, inadequate pay, long working hours, the lack of adequate opportunities for training and skills development, the gender gap in opportunities and pay, the inability to achieve a balance between work and family life, the lack of a work contract specifies the relationship between employees and the employer, the absence of social and health insurance, the absence of representatives who can defend workers interests, and the lack of membership in associations and trade unions.

The study recommended the necessity of enforcement of laws relating to work, particularly with regard to remuneration, hours of work, the work contract, health and social insurance, and family-friendly work policies. As well as activating the role of trade unions and associations defending the rights of employees in small enterprises. This along with the need for state intervention in the markets and control over small enterprises in

order to ensure the availability of decent work conditions through inspectors of Social Security, industrial safety, health and environment. The study also recommended providing subsidized training programs by the state for the development of the skills of the new arrivals to the labor market, link education policies to the needs of the labor market, encourage technical education, change concepts associated with handwork, and tripartite social dialogue between representatives of the government, employers and workers in order to identify the problems facing workers and employers and help solve them through the enactment of new laws or amending existing ones. The study also recommended the need to integrate decent work policies in the development policies adopted by the State, and to encourage self-employment in order to provide job opportunities for youth, which contributes to the treatment of the problem of unemployment through the achievement of balance between supply and demand for labor, thereby contributing to improve the wages and working conditions in small enterprises sector.

Keywords:

1. Decent Work.
2. Neoliberalism.
3. Small Enterprises.
4. Employment.
5. Rights at Work.
6. Social Protection.
7. Social Dialogue.