



OPEN ACCESS INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

A STUDY ON GENDER INEQUALITY THROUGH FEMALE LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN INDIA

Lalthanpari

Research Scholar, Department of Economics, Mizoram University, India
lalthanpari19@gmail.com

Abstract: Women’s exploitation is an age old cultural phenomenon of the Indian society. The objective of the study is to examine gender inequality in terms of category of employment and average earnings over the years from the National Sample Survey of reported data of 50th - 66th rounds. The study covers all the 28 states and 7 union territories of India. Despite the same educational background, the average wage earnings gap continued to exist despite such practises women continued to take part in the labour market whether exploited or not which is very much noteworthy especially the rural females where system was expected to be very much unorganised from all backgrounds. Though the increased in percentages performance were much higher wherein some cases it was more than that of their male counterparts from all the findings but in terms of per 1000 increased and salary earnings in absolute numbers it was still very much less when compared to male counterparts, thus indicating that gender discrimination is practised very much in the labour market due to socio-economic related tradeoffs.

Keywords: Labour, salaried employee, casual, wage.

I INTRODUCTION

India is a populous and diverse country yet very conservative in its culture and traditions. Women’s exploitation is an age old cultural phenomenon of the Indian society. The root cause of gender inequality in Indian society lies in its patriarchy system. The system of patriarchy finds its validity and sanction in our religious beliefs, whether it is Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh or any other religion, women are being discriminated against in one way or other. The unfortunate part of gender inequality in our Indian society is that the women too, through continued socio-cultural conditioning, have accepted their subordinate position to men. Such made them as well part and parcel of the same patriarchal system. The objective of the study is to examine gender inequality in terms of category of employment and average earnings over the years from the National Sample Survey of reported data of 50th - 66th rounds.

III METHODOLOGY

The study covers all the 28 states and 7 union territories of India. Purposive sampling technique have been adopted for the study - different NSS rounds have been taken for a study particularly between male and female, urban and rural areas. Samples taken up consists of 15 -59 years(male and females). Data have been collected from secondary

sources like National Sample Survey(NSS) reported survey of different rounds. Data collected from secondary sources have been edited, tabulated using excel and analysed using percentages.

III LITERATURE REVIEW

Female labour force participation for various country has been reviewed below :

Belloc (1950) examined female labour force participation and opportunities for white women. She took 91 large cities of U.S in 1940 and excludes only Washington D.C. Using statistical tools such as mean, standard error and co-efficient of correlation she pointed out that high female labour force participation rates are found in jobs which are suitable for women such as textile, apparel, tobacco, and electric machinery manufacturing while low participation is found in dominant industries such as iron and steel, machinery, automobile and basic rubber manufacturing. The industrial structure of the community affected the propensity of women to engage in the labour force along with social tradition which is accompanied by a large black population.

Dowdall (1974) examined the importance of attitudinal factors which have often been considered unimportant by other researchers and along with structural factors on female labour force participation. Data have been taken from the Population Research Laboratory of Brown University during 1968- 1969, across 1100 households of

married women age between 15 and 64 and included only white population of Rhode Island. Using Multiple Regression Analysis of structural and attitudinal factors. Results confirmed that among the married, it was the affluent that joined the workforce when they wished to and family responsibilities did not hold them back. On the other hand the lower income group women did not have the freedom like the latter where child care responsibilities outweighed more than the benefits of joining the work force which was imposed by husbands or family members. When children grew up she could join the workforce out of necessity whether she wanted it or not. In the case of married women, moderate income with children, factor of attitudes is more closely linked to employment status than any structural factors (family status, education and economic position) investigated here.

Carliner (1981) study examined labour participation of married women for 3 ethnic groups and for American Indians, Chicanos, Cubans, Japanese, Chinese and Filipinos as well. Data have been taken from U.S. Census of Population, 1970 and have used cross-section regression analysis. The highest participation was among the Blacks at 53%, Cubans, Filipinos, Japanese and Chinese too had rates above 50%, 40% for White and Indians and less than 1/3rd of Puerto Rican and Chicano. Black wives have the lowest family income, Indians and Puerto Ricans are slightly better off, Chinese was as high as the whites while Japanese was the highest. Increase in husband wages significantly lowered the probability of work for all groups except Puerto, Ricans and Filipinos. High female wages increased the probability of participation for all groups except Indians and 3 Asian groups. Education increased wage and significantly increased the chances of participation for all groups except Japanese wives.

Abraham (2009) examined the sudden spurt of female labour force participation in the year 2004-2005. Using data from NSSO reported survey (2004-2005) and

Government of India (2007) and analysing it, due to agrarian distress there was an increase in the male and female labour force participation, men search for jobs in the non-farm sector and women fill in the agriculture jobs that men left for and was not due to the cracking up of the traditional patriarchy system, as in India, institutional changes did not occur in short period rather they evolve over period of time. There was withdrawal of younger and older age groups and casual employment is high in the distressed region compared to the non-distressed region. Thus employment growth in rural India is distress and poverty pushed employment accompanied by higher levels of underemployment which all resulted from a decline of agricultural sector.

Wusu (2012) paper examined the nexus between female education, employment and fertility in Nigeria. Data were collected from Nigeria's Demographic and Health Survey (1990, 1999, 2003 and 2008) of women age 15-49 years and to get the results the study uses using ordinary least square regression analysis. Three major findings emerged where female education is inversely related to the two indicators of fertility (child ever born and number of children living). Inverse relationship can be seen with at least primary schooling but more so with secondary and post-secondary levels of schooling, women might realise smaller sizes relative to their illiterate counterparts. Secondly, when women gets employment outside their homes the opportunity of raising large family may increase significantly and thus discourage high fertility. Thirdly, female labour force participation is largely characterised by self employment and occupations that require large family size would delay the fertility transition as most of the labour force participation by women are in such areas.

IV FINDINGS

Following tables showed the findings of the study -

Table 1: Per 1000 distribution of usually employed by category of employment during 1983 to 2009-2010

Year and Round	Self employed	Regular/salaried employee	Casual labourer
Rural Male			
1993-94 (50th)	577	85	338
1999-00 (55th)	550(-4.68)	88(3.53)	362(7.10)
2004-05 (61st)	581(5.64)	90(2.27)	329(-9.12)
2009-10 (66th)	535(-7.92)	85(5.56)	380(15.50)
Rural Female			
1993-94 (50th)	586	27	387
1999-00 (55th)	573(-2.12)	31(14.81)	396(2.33)
2004-05 (61st)	637(11.17)	37(16.21)	326(-17.68)
2009-10 (66th)	557(-12.56)	28(-24.32)	399(22.39)

Urban Male			
1993-94 (50th)	417	420	163
1999-00 (55th)	415(-.48)	417(-.71)	168(3.07)
2004-05 (61st)	448(7.95)	406(-2.64)	146(-13.09)
2009-10 (66th)	411(-8.26)	419(3.20)	170(16.44)
Urban Female			
1993-94 (50th)	458	284	258
1999-00 (55th)	453(-1.09)	333(17.25)	214(-17.05)
2004-05 (61st)	477(5.29)	356(6.91)	167(-21.96)
2009-10 (66th)	411(-13.84)	393(10.39)	196(17.37)

Source: NSS 66th Round (2009-10), Employment and Unemployment Situation in India

Note: Figures in parenthesis are percentages of increase or decrease.

As per table 1, maximum employment in per 1000 figures was in the self-employment category for both male and females of urban and rural sector while least employment was in the regular salaried employment for rural male and

females while for the urban it was the casual labour. The percentage increased of regular employees was relatively high among females as compared to males in both rural and urban India except in the year 2009-2010. Along with it, percentage increased of casual labour and self employed were higher among female workers compared to their male counterparts though at lesser points in both rural and urban areas but exceptional cases of percentage points decline on casual labour employment could be seen as well.

Table 2 : Average wage/ salary earnings (Rs. 0.00) per day received by regular wage/ salaried employees of age 15-59 years for different NSS rounds

	50th Round	55th Round	61th Round	66th Round
Rural				
Male	58.48	127.32(117)	144.93(13.83)	249.15(71.91)
Female	34.89	114.01(226.77)	85.53(-24.98)	155.87(82.24)
Urban				
Male	78.12	169.71(117.24)	203.28(19.78)	377.16(85.54)
Female	62.31	140.26(125.10)	153.19(9.22)	308.79(101.57)

Source: NSS 66th Round (2009-10), Employment and Unemployment Situation in India.

Note: Figures in parenthesis are percentages of increase or decrease. Of the different category of employment, salaried employment is expected to require some level of educational level since it has a regular flow of earnings, as it belonged mostly to the organised sector. The table 2 above showed that earnings of regular wage employment between male and female of urban and rural areas, the unequal earnings showed the discrimination present in the labour market given the same category of employment. Taking into account for

previous rounds, in the case of rural males there was a large increase in average wage in the 55th round but increased at a diminishing rate in the 61st round, though it started to improve in the next round. As for rural females the percentage increase was the highest in the 55th round at about 226% a drastic fall happened in the 61st round but gradually improved in the 66th round. The situation is quite similar for urban males when compared to their rural male counterparts but as for urban females no drastic fall can be seen rather an increasing trend. The discrimination can also be seen among the urban and rural females as urban females earnings were

higher which could be due to various reasons like cost of living or other reasons.

Table 3 : Average wage/ salary earnings (Rs. 0.00) per day received by regular wage/ salaried employees of age 15-59 years for different educational qualification of different NSS rounds.

	55th Round	61st Round	66th Round
Rural			
Male	45	55.03(18.22)	101.53(84.49)
Female	29.1	34.94(20.07)	68.94(97.31)
Urban			
Male	62.4	75.1(20.35)	131.92(75.66)
Female	37.8	43.88(16.08)	76.73(74.86)

Source: NSS 66th Round (2009-10), Employment and Unemployment Situation in India.

Note: Figures in parenthesis are percentages of increase or decrease.

Table 3 showed that with increase in the educational qualification, the average wage increased and this is in particular to salaried employee where income flow is fixed for every month. This type of employment happens in the organised sector. One can see that with graduate and above level of education of the both rural and urban females, salary

earnings was the highest. On the other hand, except for the non-literates, an increased in the wage earnings with an increase in the educational qualification for females. Despite being in the organised sector, the presence of different wage earnings showed that there is an unequal treatment in the labour market given the same level of educational qualification. Even though the increased in percentages were higher the average earnings even after it still not at par with male counterparts. Such outcome again showed the inherent presence of inequality in the labour market.

Table 4 : Average wage/ salary earnings (Rs. 0.00) per day received by casual labourer of age 15-59 years for different NSS rounds

	55th Round	61st Round	66th Round
Rural			
Male	45	55.03(18.22)	101.53(84.49)
Female	29.1	34.94(20.07)	68.94(97.31)
Urban			
Male	62.4	75.1(20.35)	131.92(75.66)
Female	37.8	43.88(16.08)	76.73(74.86)

Source: NSS 66th Round (2009-10), Employment and Unemployment Situation in India.

Note: Figures in parenthesis are percentages of increase or decrease.

Average earnings of casual above have increased over the years from table 4, though men and women average wage were still not at par as the gap continued. This type of employment perhaps did not require some level of education qualification and mostly belonged to the unorganised sector. Since the job usually required more of strength where women tend to be less strong than men in terms of physical strength

perhaps this might be the reasons for the difference or could be other reasons as well.

V CONCLUSION

The general profile of India discussed in the paper showed the inherent nature of discrimination between male and female member in a household. In terms of category employment, as per data findings, there were large influx of people(male and female) in the self -employment category of both rural and urban whereas urban sector seemed to have more people(male and female) in the salaried employment as compared to their male counterparts. Despite the same educational background, the average wage earnings gap

continued to exist and besides being in the organised sector such gap payment could to an extent showed the picture for other types of employment which are in the unorganised sector especially with casual labour employment where educational qualification seemed irrelevant as compared to other types of employment.

Absence of gender inequality in the labour market seemed inevitable from the study so far but despite such practises women continued to take part in the labour market whether exploited or not which is very much noteworthy especially the rural females where system was expected to be very much unorganised from all backgrounds. The continued existence of inequality could have steamed from the household level with basic facilities biasness(health and education) and passed on to generations which again got reflected at the macro level through the labour market. Unless severe measures could be taken up from the grassroots level, the inevitability of gender inequality would continue to exist and affect the future generation of both gender which would definitely affect the productivity of both gender labour(an important component of the factors of production)in reaching its potential outcome for the development of the economy. Though the increased in percentages performance were much higher whereinsome cases it was more than that of their male counterparts from all the findings but in terms of per 1000 increased and salary earnings in absolute numbers it was still very much less when compared to male counterparts, thus indicating that gender discrimination is practised very much in the labour market due to socio-economic related tradeoffs.

REFERENCES

- [1]National Sample Survey Organisation, 50th Round. (2004-2005), Reported Survey, Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, Government of India.
- [2]National Sample Survey Organisation, 55th Round. (2004-2005), Reported Survey, Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, Government of India.
- [3]National Sample Survey Organisation, 61st Round. (2004-2005), Reported Survey, Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, Government of India.
- [4]National Sample Survey Organisation, 66th Round (2009-2010), Reported Survey, Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, Government of India.
- [5]Dowdall, J.A., “Structural and Attitudinal Factors Associated with Female Labour Force Participation”, Social Science Quarterly (21-130), Vol. 55, No. 1, 1974
- [6]Carliner, G. “Female Labor Force Participation Rates for Nine Ethnic Groups”, The Journal of Human Resources (286-293), Vol. 16, No. 2, 1981
- [7]Abraham, V. “Employment Growth in Rural India: Distress Driven?”, Economic and Political Weekly(97-104), Vol. 44, No. 16, 2009.
- [8]Belloc, B. N. “Labor-Force Participation and Employment Opportunities for Women”, Journal of the American Statistical Association(400- 410.), Vol. 45, No. 251,1950.