



OCCUPATIONAL PATTERN OF WOMEN IN WORKFORCE IN PUNJAB (INDIA)

Preeti Sharma

Chandigarh Business School of Administration, Landran

ABSTRACT Many reports show that Indian women who do work don't have great jobs. More than one third is unpaid helpers, as opposed to just 11 percent of working men. Women are also over represented in works of low productivity, agriculture and small-scale manufacturing units. Only 6 percent of employed women get formal benefits like pensions or maternity leave. Illiterate women are more possible to be in the labour force than educated women, though participation is more among women who are high-school pass outs. The correlation between female participation and income is direct. The richer a family of women is, the less likely she is to work. Women have a tendency to work in less productive jobs than men, as in many developed and developing countries (World Bank 2012). This paper is based on a preliminary examination of female occupational participation covering the period 1981-2011. It was felt necessary to probe into the critical policy question: are the majority of women workers in Punjab relegated to performing hard labour or do they continue to be engaged in low productivity-cum low social status-cum low pay work?

KEYWORDS :

"You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women".

- Jawaharlal Nehru

Introduction

According to the 'ILOs Global Employment Trends 2013 report, India's labour force participation rate for women fell from just over 37 per cent in 2004-05 to 29 per cent in 2009-10. Out of 131 countries with available data, India ranks 11th from the bottom in female labour force participation. "Despite very rapid economic growth in India in recent years, we're observing declining female labour force participation rates across all age groups, across all education levels, and in both urban and rural areas," said ILO economist Steven Kapsos during a presentation of the report in India. Many reports show that Indian women who do work don't have great jobs. More than one third is unpaid helpers, as opposed to just 11 percent of working men. Women are also over represented in works of low productivity, agriculture and small-scale manufacturing units. Only 6 percent of employed women get formal benefits like pensions or maternity leave. Illiterate women are more possible to be in the labour force than educated women, though participation is more among women who are high-school pass outs. The correlation between female participation and income is direct. The richer a family of women is, the less likely she is to work. Women have a tendency to work in less productive jobs than men, as in many developed and developing countries (World Bank 2012).

Research Methodology

The analysis is mainly concerned with identifying the spatial and temporal variations in the occupational work participation of female versus the male and finding the changes that have occurred during the period of study. Secondly, for the purpose of comparisons of relative positions of female vis-à-vis male workers, the occupational participation sex ratio has been used as the main instrument of analysis throughout the study. Thirdly, the analysis centers on one single variable, i.e., participation sex ratio of the workers and no exogenous variable has been used to explain why female work participation declined. It has been done because of the paucity of reliable and relevant data. The level of female participation has been measured by the participation sex ratio, which has been computed as the ratio of the number of females employed in a particular occupation to the number

of males employed in same occupation, multiplied by 10,000. The participation sex ratio has been calculated for avoiding values of very small fractions which would have otherwise resulted due to the fact that the female working population is much lower when compared to the male working population. To calculate growth from 1981-2011, compound growth rates has been used

Conceptual framework

Women are squeezed in limited occupations in the especially in highest level of the occupations in occupational ladder. In 2010 in India; about 43% of female workers are employed in farming, fishing and hunting occupations. On the other side, about 23% of women are employed in professional occupations, and 14% as technicians and professional assistants.

This paper is based on a preliminary examination of female occupational participation covering the period 1981-2011. It was felt necessary to probe into the critical policy question: are the majority of women workers in Punjab relegated to performing hard labour or do they continue to be engaged in low productivity-cum low social status-cum low pay work? Of course, low wages may not necessarily demote these women to a life of deprivation: women who receive low wages may live in families with other wage earner, so that their total family income may lift them above the poverty level. Or these women may live in nuclear families, so that their income can adequately support themselves and their lesser number of family members. Thus, in order to better know the consequences of being paid low wages, it is important to observe the extent to which low wages result in women living in or near poverty.

With this idea, an attempt was made to devise a tentative scale of pay-cum-socio-economic status rank of various occupations. The highest status job was given rank 1 and various occupational groups are arranged according to decreasing rank order.

Due consideration was also paid to substantial evidences that were available in regard to pay and income levels of different occupations and these were applied to determine the relative status of particular occupational group with respect to all other groups.

Table-1: 'Participation Sex Ratio' in Punjab during 1981-2011

| NCO-168 Code | Decreasing Status Rank | Occupations | Sex Ratio | Rank | Sex Ratio | Rank | Sex Ratio | Rank | Sex Ratio | Rank | | |
|--------------|------------------------|---|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|--|--|
| | | | 1981 | 1981 | 1991 | 1991 | 2001 | 2001 | 2011 | 2011 | | |
| 2 | 1 | Administrative, Executive & Managerial Workers | 92 | 8 | 282 | 7 | 501 | 8 | 548 | 8 | | |
| 0-1 | 2 | Professional, Technical and Related Workers | 3837 | 1 | 4584 | 1 | 4714 | 3 | 4758 | 4 | | |
| 7,8 & 9 | 3 | Production & Related Workers, Transport Equipment Operators & Labourers | 311 | 6 | 339 | 5 | 1457 | 5 | 1952 | 5 | | |
| 3 | 4 | Clerical And Other Supervisors | 516 | 3 | 874 | 3 | 1254 | 6 | 1667 | 6 | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|-----|---|------|---|-------|---|-------|---|------|-------|
| 4 | 5 | Sales Workers | 99 | 7 | 155 | 8 | 511 | 7 | 749 | 7 | | |
| 5 | 6 | Service Workers | 971 | 2 | 1021 | 2 | 4478 | 4 | 5355 | 3 | | |
| 6 | 7 | Farmers, Fishermen, Hunters, Loggers & Related Workers | 341 | 5 | 675 | 4 | 38245 | 1 | 41775 | 1 | 8543 | 49410 |
| X | 8 | Workers Not Classified By Occupations | 483 | 4 | 298 | 6 | 7123 | 2 | 11405 | 2 | 4561 | 21535 |

Source-Computed from India, Registrar General, Census of India, General Economic tables-Table B-series, Punjab, 1981, 1991 and 2001,*2011-estimated

The sex ratio of sum of main and marginal workers has been taken in this chapter. Data shows high participation ratio has been observed in low status jobs.

Table 1 clearly displays that the highest ranked occupation i.e., Administration, Executive and Managerial workers have lower participation rank in 1981 i.e., eight and continued be eight in 2011. Moreover, highest participation sex ratio rank has been observed in occupation having status, rank two in 1981 and 1991 but in 2001 and 2011 participation rank slipped from one to third and fourth rank respectively, because of high participation sex ratio in occupation, Farmers, Fishermen, hunters Loggers and related workers that has a seventh status rank in 2001 and 2011. Earlier this occupation was having fifth and forth ranks in 1981 and 1991. The reason of upward shift in rank of this occupation is change in the definition of worker in census of India in 2001. Second highest participation rank has been observed for occupation, Workers not classified by occupations, rank of this occupation has increased because of change in classification of

Table-2: Compound Growth Rate of 'Participation Sex Ratio' in Punjab during 1981-2011 (In Percent)

| NCO-168 Code | Decreasing Status Rank | Occupations | Growth From 1981 to 1991 | Growth From 1991 to 2001 | Growth From 2001 to 2011 | Overall growth rate from 1981 to 2011 |
|--------------|------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2 | 1 | Administrative, Executive & Managerial Workers | 13.25 | 6.59 | 1.00 | 6.02 |
| 0-1 | 2 | Professional, Technical And Related Workers | 2.00 | 0.31 | 0.10 | 0.71 |
| 7,8 &9 | 3 | Production & Related Workers, Transport Equipment Operators & Labourers | 0.96 | 17.59 | 3.30 | 5.47 |
| 3 | 4 | Clerical and Other Supervisors | 6.03 | 4.09 | 3.21 | 3.11 |
| 4 | 5 | Sales Workers | 5.11 | 14.17 | 4.34 | 5.82 |
| 5 | 6 | Service Workers | 0.56 | 17.85 | 2.01 | 5.41 |
| 6 | 7 | Farmers, Fishermen, Hunters, Loggers & Related Workers | 7.88 | 56.61 | 0.99 | 17.67 |
| X | 8 | Workers Not Classified By Occupations | -5.22 | 42.29 | 5.37 | 9.72 |

Source-Calculated from table 1

Due to male dominating society and glass ceiling in Punjab, women are always restricted to enter in this occupation. Male do not want female to head them. With the efforts of government and increasing awareness among women participation sex ratio has improved but remained at last participation rank.

In 2001, only 68 elected women officials were from urban areas as comparison to 260 women from rural areas. Introduction of Panchayati Raj Act, gave the reservation to women in villages as Sarpanch and Panch which helped to increase the participation sex ratio. Despite reservations this occupation remained at last participation rank.

Male participation in professional occupations has increased which lower the participation sex ratio. Reason of very low growth rate in this occupation is increase in male participation over the period. Because males remain insulated from job crises because they are still seen as primary bread winners. Whenever work is available it is men who opt it.

During the whole period of study it has been observed that participation sex has been remained completely in favour of men. Women are concentrated in low-productivity, low pay jobs. They work in small farms, they are overrepresented among unpaid workers and they rarely rise to positions of power. Women bear a disproportionate share of house and care responsibilities and consequently face important fixed costs associated with market work. Fixed schedules and minimum hour requirements, particularly in (formal) wage jobs, and the difficulty in adjusting responsibilities at home result in barriers to market work for women. Social norms around the role of women in the household and society also influence these trade-offs. Women are thus more likely to value flexible work arrangements and to supply

occupations in 2004. To compare the participation from 1981 to 2011 the workers which were not included earlier in previous classification of 1968 now came to be included in this head. Occupation sales workers remained on same rank i.e., seventh during the whole period. Hence, the table depicts that women in Punjab are engaged in low status and low paid occupations. And participation ranks remained more or less same for majority of occupations.

Further compound growth rate reveals that maximum growth during 1981 to 2011 was in rank seven and rank eight occupations i.e., 17.67 and 9.72 percent respectively. Lowest growth has been observed in rank two occupations i.e., 0.71 percent and this occupation did not witness any considerable growth during last two decades while participation sex ratio is at rank four. And occupation clerical and other supervisors shows second lowest growth rates which is rank four occupation. Participation sex ratio is least in Administration, Executive and Managerial workers and sale workers but these occupations have third highest growth rates i.e., 6.02 percent. If we look at inter census growth maximum growth in all the occupations was during 1991 to 2001 expect professional, technical and related workers.

fewer hours of market work on average than men, putting them at risk of being channeled into lower-quality jobs. They may also reflect discriminatory preferences within households that favour men in the allocation of productive resources. Women's limited presence in certain occupations may create barriers to knowledge and learning about women's performance, which in turn reinforces women's lack of access to these occupations.

References

1. India Registrar General, Census of India: 2011, Provisional Population Totals, Punjab.
2. India Registrar General, Census of India: 1981, Indirect Estimates of Fertility and Mortality at the District Level, Occasional Paper No.4.
3. India Registrar General, Census of India: Data on Fertility, 1991.
4. India, Registrar General Census of India – Various Issues, Primary Census Abstract, Punjab.
5. Nagaich, S., & Sharma, P. (2014). Trends in Women Work Participation in Punjab (India). Asian Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities, 4(5), 233-246.
6. Nagaich, S., & Sharma, P. (2015). Work Participation Differentials in Punjab Economy. Indian Journal of Applied Research, 5(8).
7. Nagaich, S., & Sharma, P. Is Literacy A Cause Of Increase In Women Work Participation In Punjab (India): A Regional Analysis?
8. Sharma, P., & Nagaich, S. (2014). Women's Literacy Rate, Sex Ratio, and Women Work Participation in Punjab: A Granger Causality Analysis. Arthashastra: Indian Journal of Economics & Research, 3(2), 37-45.
9. http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/comment-analysis/WCMS_204762/lang--en/index.